I have several recurring memories. Other recollections have become muddled and have eventually disappeared. Some of my strongest memories have become iconic and are not forgotten, but actually resurface during other similar episodes. My mind has assigned one certain actual event to represent a recurring emotion or action. For instance, I very often wish I did not have to do what I most surely must do. I am acutely aware that my life could easily have unfolded differently, and I could be somewhere else, doing something else, for better or worse.

Some years ago, I was many nights into removing our bees from cherry orchards where they had been rented for pollination in and around a small Oregon city. After loading, my way home went right through town, right past homes and businesses, where the people were transitioning to evening. I remember it was warm, windows and doors open to let the breeze in, and lots of people were out on the porches and lawns taking in this perfect end to the day, watching what went by. The flickering blue light of the televisions back lit the family groups outside.

My truck window was down, and as I came to a stop sign, I could hear snatches of conversations interspersed with laughter among the groups of people on porches. One in particular was just clear enough to understand. “There go the bee guys. I wonder where they are going next.” It almost sounded as though the question held a kind of envy. I imagined some part of that person wished he was going somewhere different, more interesting, exciting and challenging. Maybe my bee truck symbolized a chance to break away, to escape being stuck with what he had, but could not easily leave.

But, maybe I was just imagining what he meant, when in reality he meant nothing of the kind. It doesn’t matter. The irony is that more than a small part of me envied those people relaxing on those porches. Knowing what I was in for, and what I would feel like after hours of night driving, already short of sleep before I started, given the chance, I would have been tempted to trade places. Not for the last time.

Another iconic recollection for me has to do with opening hive lids for inspection. Among my crew, I am thought of as having a certain unhappy knack. Walking into a yard of many beehives, with the intention of popping just enough lids to get a sense of what is going on, chances are I am the one who will right off find the single dud in the group. But, in my mind, every lid I crack will perhaps be the hive I opened years before, exposing beautiful, dripping honey comb.

It was a yard of bees that had been left behind, not forgotten, but the hives were not needed in the latest pollination project. The bees were waiting for the next job. The location was just a place to park bees temporarily where a lot of colonies would not cause a nuisance. With too many hives with crummy forage for honey

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Number in parentheses next to Director’s name indicates the year the Director’s current term ends – and whether in their 1st or 2nd term. Directors Brandi, Gunter, Talbert and Wooten, along with the officers, comprise the ABF Executive Committee.
I recently had the opportunity to visit with the Kettlewells (Derald, Mary and Anna) in Milwaukee. It was the summer meeting of the Wisconsin Honey Producers Association in Red Granite, Wis. I hadn’t been to Wisconsin since the mid-1970s when I was working as a salesman for Northwestern Mutual Life and attended a couple of annual conventions at their office there. It was fun to drive right past the front steps of a building that I stood in front of 40 years ago for a picture. It hadn’t changed a bit even though I had in so many ways. I had a wonderful time and it was rewarding to meet a great group of new beekeepers and visit with some longtime friends.

The one stop on my flight from Tulsa was Chicago and as we descended to begin an approach to the airport I was totally impressed with the perfection of modern agriculture. There was laid out on the ground below the greenest carpet one could imagine. Bordered by roads of perfect one-mile squares, it was hundreds of square miles of the same uniform color broken up by a house and out buildings tucked almost routinely into each and every square. There was a river winding through the grid pattern and a snake of green trees running along it that appeared to be just the minimum number of trees that could be left to maintain the river banks. I knew, even from 5,000 feet, that I was seeing tens of thousands of acres of corn and what would likely be a veritable dessert for honey bees.

This view from a lofty level gave me a different perspective on what I knew was going on but didn’t have a picture of on a large scale. Oh, I know that all of Illinois isn’t quite this intensively farmed, but it was very impressive. The other thing that was obvious as we began to land was that when we got into the suburban areas there were more and more trees with much greater diversity of vegetation. The closer we got to the airport you could see which neighborhoods were older, as the homes seemed to disappear in the trees. It is nice to know that beekeeping is allowed in many of the areas around Chicago, as it looks like there would be good forage for bees in the confines of the city.

During my first day visit, Derald took me around to visit some of his bee yards and it was very obvious that farming is changing in many ways. Most of the farms that we were seeing north of Milwaukee had been less than 200-acre farms and most of them were dairy farms. It was obvious that was the case because the barns were still there with their silos for feeding, but they were standing neglected, unused and deteriorating. In the place of pastures and alfalfa fields were more of what I had seen around Chicago – corn, corn and more corn. It was absolutely everywhere, planted right up to the yards of the homes every quarter of a mile.

Unfortunately, a lot of it was very drought stressed and past the point of actually producing any corn, except where there was irrigation to quench the thirst of the developing ears. Small farms have been bought up or leased to larger producers of everything that feeds the country, and milk is produced on farms with thousands of cows and better business models. It was easy to see why yields of honey crops have been cut in half over the past 10 to 15 years in many areas of the country, and it became startling obvious to me that this was not going to change. If anything it is going to likely get worse in some respects for our bees as modern agriculture continues to become more and more efficient. So, how do we develop a strategy to progressively react to the changes that are so dramatically impacting the beekeeping industry and turn the tide on shrinking nectar forage?

Being the eternal optimist that I am, I am happy to announce that we have several good things going for us. The first is public opinion and awareness. Almost everywhere I go, people are concerned about bees and the future of beekeeping. They do not want a world without bees, butterflies, moths, bats and ladybugs. So, we have much support in our cause and it is just a matter of providing good planning for resolutions and the support would be there. Our greatest partner is the public, as we all want to maintain access to the foods that require pollination from our bees.

There is a new desire to live in cities that have green spaces available for restoring places of relief and reflection in our cities of concrete, steel, glass and asphalt. Frank Bruni with the New York Times just wrote an article describing the transformation that has occurred in New York City in

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Whatever your take is on the climate change, you must agree that this is a challenging time to be a beekeeper or to be involved in any other venture that depends on the weather. “Dirt farmers” and beekeepers alike fare best when the weather is within the range called “normal.”

Reports from around the country are mixed on how honey production is going. Some beekeepers are doing well, others not so.

The blame for the poor crops is mostly related to weather, ranging from too much rain to too little, too hot or too cool, not to mention fires and floods.

Considering the vagaries of weather, my memory often drifts back nearly 50 years to a spring when it seems that the weather fortunes seemed to shine on us. We had good, populous colonies (oh, for those days again!). Our early supers were filling up. There were 7 to 10 days’ worth of buds yet to open on the gallberry. Moisture conditions were ideal. So, we did what you would have done; we rushed more supers out to the bees.

For two days, I worked though rain showers putting out the supers – all foundation for cut-comb honey. I caught a bad cold – and that’s about all I caught. The rains set in and the honeyflow stopped. By the time sunny days returned, there was only enough bloom left for the strongest colonies to begin to draw the foundation, nothing really to harvest.

During my visits to Capitol Hill, making calls for our beekeepers, I have experienced many instances to marvel over. One of the most consistent over the years has been the reaction of Congressional aides to discussions of honey crops. They would ask, “What makes the difference between a good honey crop and a poor honey crop?” When we tell them that the predominant factor is the weather, their eyes are likely to glaze over. The weather, for many of them, determines whether to carry an umbrella to work or maybe to plan for lunch in the park, but not the size of their paycheck.

Back to climate change – I feel that we should plan for more extremes. I don’t have any real basis for this, just a gut-feeling. After all, we are talking about the weather! Unfortunately for beekeepers, early springs, drier or wetter weather, hotter summers, early frosts and the like are not conducive to the strongest colonies and heaviest supers. We won’t be able to change this much, if at all. The most we can hope for is to stay in tune with what’s happening in our beekeeping areas and be prepared to take whatever actions we can to ameliorate adverse weather changes and take advantage of beneficial changes as much as possible.

Here’s hoping your supers are all full and your colonies will be healthy as fall turns into winter.

Legislative Fund Contributions

The following ABF members contributed to the ABF Legislative Fund during the month of June 2012. These donations enable us to carry out the legislative initiatives that will benefit ABF members and the American beekeeping industry.

Del Signore Apiaries, Inc., Fla.
Kona Queen Hawaii, Inc., Hawaii
Richard Ramsey, Ill.

Is Your Contact Information Up-to-Date in the ABF Membership Database?

If not, you’re missing out on important communications from us, such as annual conference details, industry updates and alerts, and the monthly ABF E-Buzz electronic newsletter. Please call us at 404.760.2875 or send us an e-mail at info@abfnet.org to update your information today!
2012 First-Place 4-H Essay: The Results of Honey Bee Pollination in My Community

by Michelle Solinger, Age 15, Ken.

Have you ever had a close encounter with an Apis Mellifera? You may have seen one touch down in your yard or you may have heard a strange buzzing sound as this terrestrial being hovers at close range. Actually, most people have had close encounters with the Apis Mellifera without even realizing it.

This is not some strange creature from outer space. The Apis Mellifera is more commonly known as the honey bee. Honey bees are generally thought to produce just honey and beeswax. But very few people are aware that the honey bee provides most of the food on their table.

Take a look inside your pantry. You will find canned fruit and pumpkin, honey almond cereal, coffee, dried cranberries, as well as various cans of vegetables. In your refrigerator you might find apples, cherries, avocados, melon, blueberries, and peaches whose blossoms were all pollinated by honey bees. Without this small insect most of us would only be eating rice and wheat. So how is it that such a small creature has such a large impact on the world?

Editor’s Note: Read more of Michelle’s first-place essay on The Foundation for the Preservation of Honey Bees Web site at http://honeybeepreservation.org/2012/05/2012-4-h-winning-essays/.

How to Contact Your Congressional Representative

Representatives

Write: The Honorable ______________
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20510

Call: 202.225.3121
Ask for your representative’s office
and request to speak to the agricultural aide.

Senate

Write: The Honorable ______________
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Call: 202.224.3121
Ask for your senator’s office and
request to speak to the agricultural aide.

E-mail: To locate and e-mail your representatives and senators, visit www.congress.gov.
Foundation Update: Offering Five Graduate Student Scholarships

by Troy Fore, Executive Director, Foundation for the Preservation of Honey Bees

The Foundation for the Preservation of Honey Bees is again offering scholarships of $2,000 each to five graduate students in apiculture. This is the Foundation's eighth year to award such scholarships.

The Foundation is a charitable research and education foundation affiliated with the American Beekeeping Federation (ABF). The Foundation has benefited from a generous gift from the Glenn and Gertrude Overturf estate, and is sustained by ongoing gifts from ABF members and other supportive individuals.

The Foundation Trustees have chosen to use a portion of the grant to offer graduate student scholarships to foster professional development for young apicultural scientists. The purpose of the scholarships is to allow the recipients to attend the 2013 North American Beekeeping Conference & Tradeshow in Hershey, Pennsylvania, January 8-12. The recipients will have an opportunity to meet other researchers and beekeepers and to present their research at the meeting. The Board of Trustees looks forward to their contributions to the conference. The scholarships are available to all graduate students. Graduate students at universities outside the United States are invited to apply.

Applications for the scholarships will be accepted until October 30, 2012.

Applicants should submit to the Board for consideration:

1. A cover letter from their advisor outlining the student’s progress toward their graduate degree, tentative graduation date, and any other information about the student and their research that would help the committee “get to know” the student.
2. A curriculum vitae, or resume, not to exceed two (2) pages.
3. A research proposal (not to exceed three (3) pages). This proposal should outline the specific research experiments the student is conducting for their degree. The proposal should clearly state how the research benefits bees and/or beekeeping. The proposal can describe research that the student is planning to perform, or the progress the student already has made toward that research. The proposal should begin with an introduction to the research problem, and should follow with clear goals and objectives that state the research questions and hypotheses. The student should then discuss the methods that will be used to answer their research questions, and the expected results or results to date. Recipients will be selected in November.

Applications must be submitted electronically to: Troy Fore, executive director, Foundation for the Preservation of Honey Bees; troyfore@honeybeepreservation.org.

If you have questions or need more information about the scholarship program, contact Marla Spivak, scholarship program coordinator, Foundation for the Preservation of Honey Bees; spiva001@umn.edu.

Foundation Donations

The following ABF members made general contributions to the ABF Foundation during the months of June and July 2012.

Bill Mares, Vt.
Natasha Mensen, Ariz.

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dddwax@wat.midco.net
1947-2012 Celebrating 65 years!
Are you new to the beekeeping industry? Have you been around for a while but you need a good refresher course? Good news! The ABF Education Committee is excited to announce a nine-part webinar series called “Beekeeping 101” presented by Dr. Roger Hoopingarner, professor emeritus at Michigan State University. This series is a comprehensive educational experience with many topics focused on the biology and management of honey bees.

Most presentations will take place on the second Tuesday of each month. The webinars will begin promptly at 8:00 pm ET. Please see below for topics and respective dates:

- September 11, 2012: Fall Hive Management
- October 9, 2012: Internal Organs and Glands that Make Bees Function
- November 13, 2012: Winter Biology of the Honey Bee
- December 11, 2012: Flight and Foraging Dynamics
- January 2013: No session due to the 2013 North American Beekeeping Conference & Tradeshow
- February 12, 2013: Castes; Parthenogenesis and Sex Determination in Honey Bees; Larvae and Pupae Development
- March 12, 2013: Numbers, Boxcars and Bees
- April 9, 2013: Pollinators and Pollination
- May 14, 2013: Swarming

More details about each session will be posted on the ABF website at www.abfnet.org closer to that particular session’s scheduled date. This is going to be an excellent and informative series that we hope you will be a part of! If you’re interested in registering for any of the presentations, please refer to the registration information below.

Important Session Format/Registration Information

The sessions will be conducted via the GoToWebinar online meetings platform, which means the presenter will have a visual presentation, as well as an audio presentation. Upon entering the session online, you may choose whether to listen to the presentation through your computer’s speakers or through your phone.

Reserve your spot today by e-mailing Grayson Daniels, ABF membership coordinator, at graysondaniels@abfnet.org or by calling the ABF offices at 404.760.2875. Registration will close 48 business hours before the scheduled session. Twenty-four hours before the session the registered participant will receive an e-mail confirming participation, along with the necessary information to join the session. If an e-mail address is not provided, the ABF will call the participant with the information. Questions for the speaker must be submitted 48 business hours in advance to Grayson Daniels.

If you are unable to make the session, don’t fear! Each session will be recorded and available on the ABF Web site for member-only access.

If you have any questions about the series, the GoToWebinar platform or other general inquiries, please e-mail Grayson Daniels at graysondaniels@abfnet.org. The ABF is excited to offer this series and we will hope you are excited to be a part of it!
bees, one wouldn’t realistically expect much. But, the lid resisted being lifted and continued to hold back with a gooey attachment, even as it was pried off. Every comb was jammed full and every little space had been utilized to store the abundance. The bees came from every nook and cranny to clean up and repair the damaged, leaking honeycomb. What a wonder.

Every hive in that yard was a repeat of the first. Today, years later, each hive I walk up to, I hope to find that image fulfilled again and measure the real view against that standard. Never mind it is rarely approaching the abundance I remember, this memory is at the core of my optimistic beekeeping consciousness, where others are gone and forgotten.

We are quickly approaching the time in the beekeeping year when all activities become more to do with next season than this – wrapping up, cleaning up and preparing for the winter and next year’s almond pollination. I hope your honey crop is better than mine. It wouldn’t take much. Our hives have been fully rented at each pollination stop. Since that is our core business, I guess it has been a successful year. However, bottom line aside, I would much prefer have recurring visions of abundance, rather than reminders of how tired I am of moving bees.
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As we reach the midpoint of the promotional year, I thank all our members and friends who have or will host the Queen or Princess this year. Hosting the Queen or Princess in your home or serving as their main local contact when they stay in hotels is so important to the Queen and Princess’s year of service to our industry. I thank you all for your hospitality and the kindness you have shown our representatives. Rest assured, your efforts are valued and appreciated by all who are active in this program!

As Alyssa and Danielle have noted in their articles, there are many ways in which you can keep them busy during visits to your state, including visits to day camps, senior centers, media outlets and beekeeping meetings. Both are eager to stay active and busy when they visit your states. They have consistently voiced their willingness to do as much as they can for the industry this year and want to reach many people this year through their speeches, appearances and interviews. Alyssa has a particular interest in giving school presentations and media interviews, while Danielle’s focus centers on civic group presentations and media interviews. Consider adding these types of events to your fair and festival promotions!

Contact me if you have an idea for a presentation or appearance that might be outside the box! We’d love to have them try new opportunities and methods to get out the messages about our industry. To date, the Queen and Princess's schedules are jam packed through October, but we have some openings in November and December to accommodate your events. November and December offer great opportunities to promote honey use during the holiday season. Contact me if you are interested in developing a new promotion in your area (414.545.5514 or honeyqueen99@hotmail.com).
Welcome to the Beekeeper Education & Engagement System! The BEES network is a new online resource for beekeepers at all levels. The system is entirely internet based and aims to foster an online learning community among beekeepers. The structure of the BEES network is broken into three ascending levels of complexity (Beginner, Advanced, and Ambassador) and three general areas of content (honey bee biology, honey bee management, and the honey bee industry).

More information about the program can be found at:
http://entomology.ncsu.edu/apiculture/BEES.html

**BEES Coupon**

20% discount for ABF members only

$5 off any one course*

OR

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- *Indicate the course in which you wish to enroll: $20 total for one course or $60 total for the three “Beginner” courses; check website for current course offerings at the “Beginner” and “Advanced” levels
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- Make check payable to NC State University and send to:
  David R. Tarpy, BEES coordinator
  Department of Entomology, Campus Box 7613
  North Carolina State University
  Raleigh, NC 27695-7613

Only one coupon per current ABF member; not available for refund; all prices and offerings subject to change without notice. Offer available only if received by December 31, 2012.

More information at:
http://entomology.ncsu.edu/apiculture/BEES.html
What’s Buzzin’ with Membership
by Grayson Daniels, ABF Membership Coordinator

Do you know who drives the ABF? Who’s the captain of the boat? The conductor of the train? The queen of the hive, if you will? No, it’s not the ABF staff, Board of Directors, committees or even those bees we all love and care for. It’s you. Yes, simply you. All 1,150 of you (and counting)!

You are the reason why the American Beekeeping Federation (ABF) exists. We are here to serve you and help keep you engaged in the beekeeping industry. We are here to answer questions, provide support, offer educational programs, provide a legislative voice in Washington, D.C., and host an annual conference where you can be encouraged and informed by fellow beekeepers.

While we are busy doing all of these things, we know you are busy working with your bees. You endure harsh winters and hope that your hives are still strong come the spring. You spend endless hours once the temperature warms up working with your hives, raising new queens, extracting honey, and ordering new bees. You take the time to meet with other local beekeepers in your area to exchange information and support each other along the way.

So, what are we asking for? Well, simply put, we are asking for more of you! Beekeeping is becoming increasingly more popular in the United States and we want to take advantage of this in order to help our organization grow.

The only way to do this is with your help. If we want more people like you, then we need you to help us find them!

We encourage you to wear your ABF membership pin at your local and state meetings. Request that an informational package be sent to you for your next meeting. We will provide everything you need to help promote the ABF. “Like” us on Facebook and share our page on your wall. Tell your friends and family about all the wonderful benefits that membership with the ABF has to offer. Renew your membership before it expires to ensure that you do not lose any of our valuable benefits. Register for the 2013 North American Beekeeping Conference & Tradeshow and encourage a friend or family member to come with you.

Every one of our members is valued and, together, you all make this a stronger organization. Our goal at the ABF is to speak up for beekeepers at the national level and this voice only becomes stronger as our membership grows. Let’s work together to help the ABF grow. Remember, you are the queen of the hive!

Please feel free to call us at 404.760.2875 or send us an e-mail at info@abfnet.org if we can assist you in your membership recruitment efforts.

For the past several years there has been a “semi-formal” meeting of the ABF Research Committee at the ABF annual conference to discuss ways in which we could promote and improve communication of research discoveries to the membership at large. This led to the development of the monthly ABF E-Buzz “Science Buzz” column, which we hope has been useful in letting you know what is new. However, we all realized that we should be doing more to get new ideas on bee management to the membership and in fostering research by members. Why let the scientists have all the fun when beekeepers are always trying new things?

At the ABF annual meeting last January, ABF Board member Joe Carson took our committee to a new level. Under his leadership, the ABF Research Committee has taken great steps to promote communication of research to the membership. We now have monthly teleconferences and, through Joe’s efforts, have formally established a new research program aimed at supporting research conducted by beekeepers. This program was initiated because all of us realize that beekeepers are doing their own research all of the time, although we sometimes think of it as just tinkering or tweaking things to improve bee management.

The new research program is aimed at providing some support to beekeepers to conduct studies on their ideas to improve bee management in replicated studies using test and control groups so that results can be compared and presented to the ABF members as a whole.

This is really exciting because you can apply for funds to prove that your ideas work and present your findings at the ABF annual conference so others can use them! We

(continued on page 22)
The following individuals contributed to the Friends of the Bee Fund during the month of June 2012. These donations enable us to fund educational programs and services that will benefit ABF members and the American beekeeping industry.

- Beth, Nikky and Londale Dhesi, Calif. (In honor of Dennis Rittenhouse)

**Support the World’s Most Beneficial Insect**

The honey bee today faces its largest challenge in its long history – its continued survival. Factors fighting against the honey bee include:

- Parasitic varroa mites that not only affect colony numbers, but vector over a dozen viruses that affect honey bee health.
- Continued loss of habitat due to urban expansion and the even larger problem of monocultural practices of modern agriculture.
- Challenging weather extremes that can affect honey bee health due to drought and floral degradation.
- Increased use of pesticides affecting all beneficial insects.

With your generous donation you can help protect the honey bee habitat, aid in the fight against Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD), encourage government-sponsored research, assist in the battle against adulterated honey in the marketplace and help ensure the continued role of the honey bee in pollinating 1/3 of our food supply.

Become a friend of the bee with your donation of $25, $50 or $100. Donate today and receive a stylish Friends of the Bee bumper sticker…and help us tip the balance back in favor of the honey bee. Contact the ABF at 404.760.2875 for a donation form. Thank you for “bee-friending” the honey bee!

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Hello beekeepers! We’ve officially made it to summertime. I hope that your hives are faring well during all of the warm weather. It’s about time to start stacking up the supers and kick start honey production. I can’t wait to begin the first rounds of extractions! May and June provided me time to manage my bees, but I still kept busy with promotions across the country.

During the first few weeks of May, I made up for all of the time spent away from home by doing a series of local promotions. Anna Kettlewell and I affectionately referred to this week as “Blitzburgh,” because I would be fitting a large number of events around the Pittsburgh area into only a few short days. In seven days at the end of April and the beginning of May, I visited 10 schools and gave a total of 23 presentations reaching 1,937 students. I gave eight cooking demonstrations in high schools and to Brownie Troops, reaching 235 people. I visited three civic groups, including the Allegheny County Council, one of the governing bodies for the city of Pittsburgh, where I gave presentations to 110 people. I also had a live in-studio interview and cooking demonstration on KDKA-TV’s Pittsburgh Today Live show valued at over $7,500 in free advertising for the American Beekeeping Federation. All in all, it was a busy week!

One of the highlights of my week included my visit to the Harmony Habitats Environmental Club in Port Vue, Pa. Elementary school students stay after school to participate in a club that beautifies the school grounds by maintaining environmentally (and pollinator) friendly plants. The club sponsor had requested a cooking demonstration, but I thought we could do something a bit more exciting for the kids. I make beeswax lotions for my family’s beekeeping business, so I decided to bring my lotion making kit to school. Every student (and even a few teachers!) went home with their own sample of beeswax lotion that they had helped to create. The students were fascinated by the simple process that turns ordinary household ingredients into a tangible product. You can make your own beeswax lotion using this simple recipe (see box for details).

On May 15, I flew out to Denver, Colo., to stay with hosts Terry and Theresa Dorsey and participate in promotional work in the area. During the week, I visited two schools and gave a total of nine presentations reaching 250 students. The Dorseys and I approached school presentations as a team. Each of us took charge of a station with the students split into three groups to visit each one. Theresa showed the National Honey Board’s educational video, “The Honey Files: A Bee’s Life.” Terry brought his observation hive into the classroom to give the students a closer look inside a colony. I gave my regular presentation and then answered the students’ questions.

There are some topics that are hard to explain in a classroom setting, armed with just beekeeping equipment and educational slides, and also under time constraints. I encouraged each student to visit the blog that Princess Danielle and I update regularly: www.buzzingacrossamerica.com. This website is geared toward elementary-aged children. It features a monthly blog post, honey recipes, state beekeeping facts, a travel log for the Honey Queen and Princess, and links to videos that cover a variety of beekeeping topics. The most exciting section for children is the “Questions” tab where they can post a question about honey or beekeeping and expect a quick response from me or Princess Danielle.
This blog operates year round. Even though your students are not in school right now, they can still learn about the importance of honey bees! Please direct them to our blog for more exciting information and fun facts.

In Colorado, I also had the opportunity to sit down for lunch with Beth Conrey, president of the Colorado State Beekeepers Association. It was a pleasure to meet with her and discuss beekeeping in Colorado. Beth maintains a very highly organized swarm hotline. As of my visit, beekeepers in Colorado had responded to nearly 200 swarm calls! I am sure we all know the value of a swarm these days. Does your area have a plan of action regarding swarms? There’s no time like the present to get your local beekeeping organization involved with the local municipality to ensure that all honey bee swarms are treated with professional care and respect.

I also visited the National Honey Board offices in Firestone, Colo. It was wonderful to finally meet some of the great folks who keep that organization running smoothly. The NHB supplies beekeepers across the country with countless educational materials. Visit www.honey.com for more information, and to request materials for your next event or fair.

I rounded out my time in Colorado with two more speaking engagements. I had the opportunity to speak to 65 members of the High Land Beekeeping Club in Littleton. Aside from talking about the value of the Honey Queen Program, one of my goals at this meeting was to spark ideas for future visits from a Queen or Princess. A fair or festival is a great start, but these visits can be supplemented by school presentations, Boy or Girl Scout Troop presentations, media interviews and even government visits. Plan a pollinator-friendly plant sale with your local nursery and include a honey bee information booth. There are so many possibilities! On my last evening in Colorado, I spoke to 25 adults and children as part of a church Life Group program in Brighton. Along with an observation hive and a short film about honey bees, the audience was truly enthusiastic and eager to learn more about the inner workings of the colony. What a treat!

As we head into the middle of summer, my schedule becomes very busy! Now is the time to start planning a visit from the Honey Queen or Princess for this fall or even next spring. It’s never too early! For more information, contact program chairperson Anna Kettlewell at 414.545.5514 or at honeyqueen99@hotmail.com. Wonder where I will travel next? Visit www.facebook.com/AmericanHoneyQueenProgram to stay updated with posts and photos from the road. Also be sure to check the next ABF Newsletter and the ABF E-Buzz to learn more details about travels!

### Easy Beeswax Lotion

- 1 c. water
- 1 c. extra virgin olive oil
- 1/4 tsp. Borax
- 4 vitamin E capsules
- 2 oz. melted beeswax
- 10 drops essential oil
  (lavender, coconut, etc.)

In a microwave-safe container, heat water, olive oil, borax, and contents of vitamin E capsules on high for 1 ½ minutes. Stir mixture thoroughly, then add melted beeswax. Pour into mixing bowl. Using a hand mixer, whip the mixture until it begins to cool, remembering to scrape the sides of the bowl. As mixture begins to thicken, add essential oil just before pouring mixture into jars to set. Once cooled, enjoy your beeswax lotion!
From the Honey Princess

by Danielle Dale, 2012 American Honey Princess

As I write this, I noticed that the official start to summer is less than a week away, which of course means the busy season for beekeepers! I have seven hives this year, and I am pleased to say that they are all off to a good start; I hope that you can say the same. In addition to tending to my bees, I had many wonderful opportunities to promote the beekeeping industry in May and June!

On May 5, I attended the 100th year anniversary of Girl Scouts celebration in Madison, Wis. At the celebration, I set up my bee pictures, beekeeping tools, and honey at a table while Girl Scouts would come by and ask me questions. Over 3,000 girls attended the celebration, and I gave countless mini presentations to large and small troops throughout the day. One of the reasons why I was invited to the celebration was that I was a Girl Scout for 12 years and received my Gold award, the highest honor in Girl Scouts. This is something that I shared with the girls before talking about the importance of honey bees. Boy and Girl Scout troops are often excited to learn about honey bees and beekeeping. Consider contacting troop leaders from your area when hosting the Queen or Princess.

On May 10, I stopped in Janesville, Clinton, and Beloit, Wis., to give presentations in four schools and one day care to a total of 470 students! That same day, I had a 20-minute radio interview for a program called “Ag Matters.” This program features a different aspect of agriculture each week, and, that week, it was beekeeping! The interview aired on two different stations, WJVL 99.9 FM and WCLO 1230 AM, throughout the weekend and generated approximately $3,200 in free publicity for our industry. Alyssa and I often post the interviews we have on our Facebook Page (American Honey Queen Program), so if you would like to keep up with our travels, including our interviews, feel free to “like” the page!

The following day, on May 11, I traveled to Rockford and Freeport, Ill., and gave five presentations in four schools to a total of 175 elementary school students. The students were thrilled to learn how important honey bees are for the state of Illinois and for our entire nation! Finally, on May 12, I had the opportunity to attend my first farmers’ market of the year in Janesville, Wis. At the market, I helped beekeepers sell honey and beeswax products. I answered many questions about the difference between light and dark honeys and the health of honey bees. It was also exciting to see many of the students that I spoke to earlier in the week come through the market with their families and buy honey – this shows how beneficial school promotions are to our industry. I also had an interview with a local Janesville cable station, JA-TV, and also an interview for an Internet site for the city. I thank Chris and Amy Blakeney for being wonderful hosts during my visit and for arranging my promotions!

I had a new experience on May 15 presenting to a Red Hatters Club in Onalaska, Wis. The group of ladies invited me to join them for lunch before giving them a PowerPoint presentation about the industry. They were very interested in the many different uses of honey and what honey bee friendly flowers that they could plant. Consider contacting these groups when preparing to host the Queen or Princess in your area.
In the remaining weeks of May, I gave 12 presentations to 340 students in five schools in Wisconsin and Minnesota. I also had two more interviews. The first interview was for News Channel 19 WXOW out of LaCrescent, Minn. The interview was 2.5 minutes long, but that was still plenty enough time to talk about the importance of honey bees and beekeeping and to explain how I made a honey lime fruit dip. The second interview I had was in my hometown of Sparta, Wis. The 10-minute interview was with WCOW 97 and focused on many different aspects of the industry. Those two interviews generated approximately $3,800 in free publicity for our industry!

School has now drawn to a close for the summer, and so far I have given 65 presentations to a total of 3,827 students. The start of June means the start of new exciting summer promotions for Alyssa and me. June 7 brought me to Tomah, Wis., to present to a group of 15 Girl Scouts. The girls were excited to learn about honey bees, even in the summer. They also had fun making a honey snack, while I explained to them the many different ways they could use honey at home. On June 9, I attended a farmers’ market in LaCrosse, Wis. At the market, I helped my grandmother, Nancy Dale, sell her honey and other beeswax products. Hundreds of people came through the market that Saturday, and I talked to many of them about beekeeping throughout the nation. This was a special promotion for me because I have been attending this market with my grandmother since I was a little girl, and it was a dream come true to finally work with her as the American Honey Princess!

I look forward to many great promotions in Iowa, California, New Jersey, Washington and Wisconsin in these next few months. If you have young children or grandchildren, I encourage you to send them to our blog, www.buzzingacrossamerica.com, to learn more about the industry and find out what Alyssa and I are doing each month. Alyssa and I have also been posting educational videos that we have created on our blog and YouTube channel, which make great learning opportunities. If you would like to schedule a promotion with one of us, please contact the American Honey Queen Program Chair, Anna Kettlewell, at 414.545.5514 or honeyqueen99@hotmail.com. I hope to see you soon!

Know a new beekeeper? Introduce them to the American Beekeeping Federation! www.abfnet.org
the past 15 years, which is “emblematic of a coast-to-coast pattern of intensified dedication to urban parkland.” There is even an international conference, “Greater & Greener,” which is dedicated to re-imagining parks for 21st century cities. And beekeeping has returned to New York, as well, with many other cities changing their policies around beekeeping.

As cities eat up more and more space, we need to develop partnerships with planning good planting strategies that will help to ensure that pollinators have what they need to flourish. We need to continue to educate the public that there are things they can do in their parks and yards that will help with their backyard and community gardens. But, this won’t solve the problem for commercial beekeepers. We can’t move en masse to the cities to do our beekeeping.

We also have a huge partner in agriculture and it’s evident anytime I talk to a farmer, whether he’s producing almonds, cucumbers, cranberries or corn. They are all critically tied to pollination and even in the case of farmers who produce crops that don’t require pollination they still eat and utilize crops that do. I am excited about current research being conducted at Iowa State, which is pioneering the development of new varieties of soybeans that produce more nectar and pollen, and increase yields with the help of honey bee pollination efforts. If new varieties of large crops such as corn and soybeans could be improved to be more bee friendly, we could make some real inroads into our current problems. Can you imagine how different it would be if corn, cucumbers, squash, pumpkins, green beans and potatoes all produced good quantities of nectar and pollen rich in protein? We really need to do a better job of realizing this and again developing efforts to establish programs that will have mutual benefits to both agriculture and beekeepers.

We also had a bill introduced last year called the Highways BEE Act (Highways Bettering the Economy and Environment), H.R. 2381. This legislation was introduced during the 2011 National Pollinator Week. It proposes better use of the tens of millions of acres along U.S. highways in the hopes of providing better pollinator habitat. We need to push collectively for the passage of this legislation, as it would be a real additional plus for our bees. We also need to continue to push with the USDA for more set aside plantings and better incentives for doing so. We have good partners in Project Apis m., the Pollinator Partnership, Bee Friendly Farming, research universities and our USDA bee labs, who are all working every day to assist us. We need to focus on their efforts in the media and work to keep the public awareness at current levels or hopefully even elevate it. From my viewpoint, we have the tools to solve many of our current problems, we just need to do a better job of putting them to use.
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Louise Wright, Texas

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Mary Kettlewell, Wis.

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  - 21+ . . . $74.50
- M019005 – Mega Bee – 5 lb bag $19.50

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I hope your honey is being or has already been harvested and hopefully you have had a good honey crop. Our prayers are with all of you that have been affected by the drought and the wildfires. Hopefully, this fall will bring some moisture to help with the dry conditions.

Have you made your plans to attend the 2013 North American Beekeeping Conference & Tradeshow in Hershey, Pennsylvania, January 8-12? If yes, I hope all of you have been taking pictures for the annual ABF Auxiliary Photo Contest, which will be held during the conference. Here are the rules for the photo contest:

**Four Categories:**
- Adults and Beekeeping
- Kids and Beekeeping
- Honey
- Bees and Nature (i.e., bees on flowers, bees on frame, hives in orchard)

**Requirements:**
- Submit two 5x7 photos for each entry (5x7 size before matting)
- At least one photo must be matted for judging (single matt only)
- 3x5 index card must be attached to back of photo with name, address and photo category

Please read over the rules carefully and make special note of the size of the picture and that one is to be matted with a single matt.

Keep taking those photographs and enter the photography contest at the ABF conference in Hershey! We can’t wait to see your work. The Cooking with Honey Contest rules will be in the next issue of the ABF Newsletter, so be sure to try out those recipes with honey as the main sweetener!
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