Dr. Tom Seeley describes the decision-making process utilized by honey bee colonies in his recent book *Honey Bee Democracy*. The colony uses all its members in collecting information, advocating for various options, and eventually making choices that will determine the activities and eventual success of the hive.

Most of us would say that the ABF is a democratic organization, with bylaws, elections along with checks and balances in our governance. But unlike a bee hive, very few of our members participate in making decisions and selecting our leaders, in part because of the restrictions placed on eligibility to vote. Our bylaws require candidates and voters to be present at the conference. In order to attend the conference you must pay the registration fee, and pay for travel and lodging, which for the purposes of the election of officers, is a poll tax. To be truthful, if a member showed up and asked to vote without registering, we would find a way to accommodate that.

And, in fairness, there are arguments to support keeping the current system for elections at the conference. Those that attend the conference might be more likely to make a commitment to the organization, and potential candidates might demonstrate some personal qualifications to the membership present. We have always done it this way and there is wisdom in such traditions. Actually, our current system of choosing the Board of Directors was established about 10 years ago when we created Special Interest Groups (SIG). Our founding fathers, and mothers, had nothing to do with this current election procedure.

In this day and age, most of the business of the ABF is conducted by e-mail and conference call. Do we really believe that only those that attend the conference have an interest in the direction of the organization? And what of those who miss a conference because of temporary family, health or weather issues, or because of financial situations? Voting by mail, or electronically, is common and the technology exists to make it secure. Some believe that taking the elections out of the conference would free up a lot of energy to make the conferences run more smoothly, and be more enjoyable for everyone.

There are some serious difficulties with our current system. On the one hand, selecting two board members from each SIG assures representation from all parts of the industry. However, while the SIG sessions are popular and well attended, as soon as there is mention of electing a board member, there is a mass exodus from the room. The elections all too often are carried out with a handful of voting members present.

In years when we have a joint meeting with the American Honey Producers Association, these elections become especially awkward. In an organization with 1,200 members, sometimes board members are elected by a half dozen voters. The third of the membership that attends the conference by and large chooses to not vote. It’s a free country. However, two thirds of our membership is not allowed to vote, because they are not present at the conference. Honey bees would be a different animal if they organized themselves like the ABF.

We elect our officers at the annual business meeting, also at the conference. Normally, 50 or 60 members attend the business meetings. Again, in an organization the size of the ABF, the
2012 ABF Board of Directors

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Directors Appointed by the President:
Gene Brandi (2013 – 1st term)
15346 South Johnson Road • Los Banos, CA 93635
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John Talbert (2014 – 1st term)
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Ph: 972.843.8084 • Fax: 972.843.8084
E-mail: john@sabinecreekhoney.com

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.
Last issue we discussed a little bit about how what we believe is based on our viewpoint to given situations and our ability to interpret those events based upon our individual experience and understanding. Our differences of education, belief systems and personal experience make it difficult for two different people to have an exact same recall of most events. I am not ruling out the possibility that some just need a better set of glasses. This is what makes the word perspective so important in our attempt to find what we can depend upon to arrive at a conclusive opinion of what we can trust.

During the past 12 years or so I have contributed a large amount of information for newsletters and periodicals, both in and out of the beekeeping industry. Information research drives you to more and more resource bases and you find three more links to search at every site. It seems the more your inquiring mind explores, the more things there are to explore and attempt to understand. From your perspective, you are now likely asking, “Just where is Tim going with all this?” I read research articles almost daily, as time allows, and I just received a paper titled “Dying Bees and the Social Production of Ignorance,” authored by Daniel Lee Kleinman and Sainath Suryanarayanan. It was a real treat to read and explains in a structured and analytical way many of the thoughts that I have had during the past five to seven years when trying to understand the problems we now face with our bees. The online version can be found at: http://sth.sagepub.com/content/early/2012/04/27/0162243912442575.

The quick summary is that much of the science that has been done in regard to toxicity studies have been done within very narrow confines and directed by the “interests, stakes and norms that honey bee toxicologists face in academic and corporate settings.” Well, just what does that mean? It is very difficult when doing field studies to define how an individual pesticide, the one being tested, interacts with anything or everything else that honey bees can and will be exposed to in their natural environment. It means that the protocol for testing the toxicity of pesticides is most often not involved or complex enough to really understand the relationships between pesticides and honey bee mortality and, especially, CCD.

It also means that past research promotes a level of ignorance due to these limitations and differing interests of those conducting the studies. Most commercial beekeepers that have been near corn and soybean production in the past six years have come to the understanding that our bees are somehow affected by the new systemic neonicitinoids that are now in widespread use. We don’t have any data other than our own perspective that bees are not foraging as well, living as long or thriving the way they used to do 20 years ago.

I moved out of intense agricultural areas in 2007 knowing that I couldn’t survive a third year loosing half of our bees. The problem is that the data needed to arrive at a direct correlation is extremely complex. Doing toxicity studies on individual bees is as poor a study as attempting to understand coronary heart disease or stroke causality by only looking at the human fingernail. Individual bees are not organisms able to survive alone.

Marla Spivak has, for many years, explained the super organism concept in regard to honey bees. They are only able to thermo-regulate, reproduce and even breathe as a colony. It is very difficult to recreate the exact circumstances that all interact to cause CCD because of all of the pesticides found in our hives, the interactions between those insecticides, miticides and fungicides and the interactions with the viruses that mites vector currently. I am likely not even covering first base here when discussing variables.

Some time ago when discussing the difficulties in analyzing the situation with Dave Hackenberg, we agreed that the variables involved make this almost an “undoable science” (Frickel et al. 2010). Observing all of the synergistic effects involved would take lots of studies and more money than is likely available. While there is a great effort to discover the causes of our bee and pollinator problems, researchers, agrochemical companies and beekeepers all have different perspectives to the situation.
Pesticides are a dilemma for beekeepers. We must have access to the ones we need for our hives, but the ones used by others can be a deadly proposition for our colonies.

When the unfortunate happens and our bees are damaged or killed by crop and environmental pesticides, we should report these events to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and to the appropriate state authorities – not as a punitive measure, but for information purposes.

In a recent letter, the manager of the Ecological Incident Information System (EIIS) at EPA has asked for more reports.

“Historically, OPP has not received many beekill incident reports to enter into the EIIS database,” said Robert Miller of EPA’s Office of Pesticide Programs (OPP). “It would be extremely helpful to OPP for beekeepers to report bee incidents, and there are a range of options for doing so. Beekill incident reports can be filed with the state lead agencies responsible for enforcing pesticide labels (typically the state’s department of agriculture), reporting directly to the chemical company responsible for manufacturing a pesticide (using contact information provided on the product labels), or directly to OPP via two new online web portals.” (See the sidebar for the links.)

The EIIS database contains reports on adverse effects of pesticides to a wide range of taxa including honey bees, Miller explains. These reports are submitted by chemical manufacturers, state/local/tribal governments and the general public. The EIIS database is used by OPP risk assessors when evaluating the potential effects of pesticide(s) in the environment.

Even if beekeepers elect to report incidents directly to EPA using either the NPIC or e-mail options, Miller encourages them to report the incident to their responsible state and local agencies as well so that the incidents can be properly investigated.

If you have any questions or comments, you may contact:

Robert A. Miller
Environmental Protection Specialist
Environmental Fate & Effects Division, Branch 1
Office of Pesticide Programs
United States – Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.,
Washington, D.C. 20229
Mail Code: 7507P | Phone: 703.347.8012

It seems that we will have the USDA-NASS honey production and price report available again next year. We have received an inquiry about the optimum schedule for the report, which we thought we had lost to budget-cutting earlier this year.

Participation is one key to keeping the report. When you get the survey form in the fall, fill it out and return it promptly. Add a note saying how valuable the report is to you and other beekeepers.

You can access this year’s report and archives of earlier years at http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/MannUsda/viewDocumentInfo.do?documentID=1191.

Having the EPA show interest in bee kills and NASS being willing to resume the annual honey report are direct results of the work done by the ABF. The ABF Legislative Fund is used specifically for this purpose. If having an effective voice in Washington, D.C., for the beekeeping industry is important to you, consider a contribution to the ABF Legislative Fund. You can contribute along with your dues renewal or at any time online on the ABF website at www.abfnet.org.

**REPORTING PESTICIDE DAMAGE**

- National Pesticide Information Center (NPIC): http://npic.orst.edu/
- Directly to EPA via e-mail to: beekill@epa.gov
- State pesticide enforcement agency (typically the state’s department of agriculture)
- Report directly to the chemical company responsible for manufacturing a pesticide (using contact information provided on the product labels or the company’s website)

For more information on EPA’s pollinator protection efforts, visit: http://www.epa.gov/opp00001/ecosystem/pollinator/index.html
Donate to the ABF Legislative Fund
Send your contributions to: ABF Legislative Fund  •  3525 Piedmont Rd. | Bldg. 5, Ste. 300  •  Atlanta, GA 30305

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Legislative Fund Contributions
The following ABF members contributed to the ABF Legislative Fund during the months of March, April and May 2012. These donations enable us to carry out the legislative initiatives that will benefit ABF members and the American beekeeping industry.

Mark Anderson, Texas
Donald Barnard, Neb.
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Lawrence Dubose, Ill.
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Edward Weiss, Conn.
William Wilson, Utah
Todd Youngblood, Texas
Paul Ziehli, Wis.

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.
To determine what crops were pollinated by honey bees in her community of Shelby County, Louisville, Ky., Michelle Solinger, 15, quizzed farmers and orchardists and handed out surveys at a beekeeping workshop. The result was a list of 16 crops ranging from apples to squash to watermelons. Her essay was judged the best of the 20 state winners entered in the 2012 4-H Beekeeping Essay Contest, sponsored by the Foundation for the Preservation of Honey Bees.

Michelle wrote about the importance of honey bee population and summed up her findings: “When a honey bee pollinates a flower, it turns it into something more complex; something that is able to support life.” Her first place prize is a cash award of $750.

Tucker Van Brunt, 12, of Center Tuftonboro, N.H., took the second place award of $500. He interviewed beekeepers representing three generations to learn about the benefits of pollination and to get their views on the cause of CCD. “My opinion about the cause of Colony Collapse Disorder is that the pesticides are very slowly eliminating the bees,” he wrote.

After writing about the three beekeepers’ pollination activities, Tucker wrote, “Each of these beekeepers is inspiring others to be aware of how important the small and powerful honey bee is to our lives. It just goes to show that even though honey bees are small, they give a big impact!”

The life of “Joy,” a fictionalized honey bee was imagined by Marina Graham, 13, from Enumclaw, Wash. Her third place essay earned her $250. She focused on Washington state apple crop and concluded: “In my observation, bees are essential to all my meals, and what would I do without honey on my cereal in the morning? Honey bees are irreplaceable for pollination of the heavily-relied-upon Washington state apple crop. Next time you take a bite of a juicy apple, remember it was likely pollinated by one of creation’s most fascinating creatures.”

Each state winner, including the national winners, will receive a copy of a book about beekeeping.

The essay topic for 2013 is “Reducing the Usage of Bee-Killing Pesticides in My Community.” The 4-H’ers are encouraged to learn about bee-killing pesticides being used in their communities – by homeowners, businesses, or farmers. Then, they should investigate how the impact of those pesticides on honey bees can be lessened. Students interested in writing should contact their local 4-H offices for contest details. The state selection must be done through the 4-H system. The complete rules are available on the Foundation’s website at www.honeybeepreservation.org. The full text of the winning essays is posted there, as well.

**2012 4-H FOUNDATION ESSAY WINNERS**

- **Michelle Solinger**, Ken. – NATIONAL WINNER
- **Tucker Van Brunt**, N.H. – SECOND-PLACE WINNER
- **Marina Graham**, Wash. – THIRD-PLACE WINNER
- **Spring Vasey**, Del. – HONORABLE MENTION

**STATE WINNERS**

- **Ashlee Brown**, Ark.
- **Ariana Tribby**, Calif.
- **Grace E. Schultz**, Conn.
- **Samuel Byers**, Fla.
- **Zafar Alam**, Ga.
- **Olav Stanton**, Idaho
- **Sophia Siros**, La.
- **Isabelle Kindler**, Miss.
- **Layne Sachez**, N.M.
- **Gabrielle Marie Venturini**, N.C.
- **Rachel Doklovic**, Ohio
- **Cole Plunkett**, Tenn.
- **Callie Layne Herring**, Texas
- **Russell Babb**, Utah
- **Anne Marie McPherson**, Va.

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**Foundation Donations**

_The following ABF members made general contributions to the ABF Foundation during the months of March, April and May 2012._

- John Brennan, Ill.
- Anita Collins, Pa.
- Marion Ellis, Neb.
- Samuel Golston, W. Va.
- Bryon Hansen, Wis.
- Brian Higgins, Ga.
- Matthew LaForge, Wis.
- Nancy McFarlane, Ore.
- Tracey Middlebrooks, GA
- Nancy Putnam, Fla.
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!
leadership is elected by this small group, for the most part the same people who are State Delegates. The delegates also elect four Board members, at the conference, from eligible members present at the conference. Very few bees in our swarm are participating in making the decisions.

Beekeeping is changing. The ABF is changing, too, most notably because of the changing demographics of the growing membership. It is inevitable that the organization will change to meet the needs and desires of that membership. But, our ability to change is seriously hampered by a system of governance that limits the input of the group as a whole. Perhaps the biggest hurdle to change is the difficulty in changing our bylaws, and it should be so. Any changes need to be well thought out, presented well in advance, and debated freely by the membership.

In no way am I disappointed in the Board members and officers that have been selected. That is not my point. But I do believe that the ABF can evolve into a more robust and responsive organization if we use the wisdom and energy of all of the membership. Are we willing to work toward a honey bee democracy?
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Early Morning or Evening Calls Preferred

“Member of New World Carniolan Project”
Queen Committee Report
by Anna Kettlewell, Honey Queen Program Chair

As I write this, May is just around the corner. This year is just flying by for Alyssa and Danielle! They continue to work enthusiastically and professionally for our industry. Their eagerness is infectious!

Spring has been busy for the Queen and Princess, primarily on the local level, but also with a few spring trips. Fairs, festivals and farmers’ markets are gearing up and we will soon transition from school and educationally-based trips to honey promotion and fair and festival season. We still have room on the calendar for events in July and in late fall, so consider submitting your request now. To date, we have 25 fairs and festivals planned through the summer and early fall! Educational and beekeeping convention trips are planned in the fall months, and we’d love to book more of these events throughout November and December. Please let me know if you have an event in mind. Together, we can discuss options and help develop a great promotion for your club or business and the Queen Program!

We continue to seek new opportunities in states like Michigan, New Mexico, Vermont, South Carolina, Alabama, Idaho, Utah, South Dakota and Arkansas this year. Hosting the Queen or Princess need not be a week-long event; you could host the Queen or Princess for a three-day weekend event, such as your local farmers’ market or garden show, along with some media coverage, or a few days in the week visiting area schools, civic groups, summer camps or grocery stores. Be creative! There are many ways to promote the industry with the American Honey Queen or Princess, many of which you may already be doing.

I look forward to hearing from more of you this year to schedule events in your state! Please contact me about your ideas at honeyqueen99@hotmail.com or 414.545.5514.

Learn How to Grow Your Knowledge and Understanding of Bees and Beekeeping
by Robin Lane, ABF Executive Director

The American Beekeeping Federation (ABF) is pleased to announce a new online educational program available at a discounted rate for all ABF members – the Beekeeper Education & Engagement System (BEES). Under the direction of Dr. David Tarpy, associate professor and extension apiculturist, Department of Entomology, North Carolina State University, the BEES network is an online resource for beekeepers at all levels.

The system is Internet based and promotes an online learning community among beekeepers. The structure of the BEES network is broken into three levels of complexity (Beginner, Advanced and Ambassador) and three areas of content (honey bee biology, honey bee management and the honey bee industry). New courses and content areas are also in development and will be introduced soon. More information can be found at http://entomology.ncsu.edu/apiculture/BEES.html.

Through the end of the year, ABF members will be given the opportunity to participate in the program at a 20-percent discount (see page 11 for BEES Program coupon; coupon must be presented at time of registration). Dr. Tarpy also recently conducted an “ABF Conversation with a Beekeeper” webinar, where he introduced, in detail, the BEES Program. The session can be accessed via the ABF website at www.abfnet.org under the “Education & Events” tab. Log on and learn more about this outstanding educational program today!
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

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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.

NC State Apiiculture Program
Raleigh, NC 27695-7613

More information at:
http://entomology.ncsu.edu/apiculture/BEES.html
Total losses of managed honey bee colonies from all causes were 21.9 percent nationwide for the 2011/2012 winter, according to the annual survey conducted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Bee Informed Partnership and the Apiary Inspectors of America (AIA).

This represents a substantial drop in mortality compared to the previous five years, when winter losses of around 30 percent have been reported. Previous surveys found total colony losses of 30 percent in the winter of 2010/2011, 34 percent in 2009/2010, 29 percent in 2008/2009, 36 percent in 2007/2008 and 32 percent in 2006/2007.

The unusually warm winter during 2011/2012 could be one possible contributing factor to the decline in colony losses, although no direct scientific investigation of the weather connection has been conducted. January 2012 ranks as the fourth-warmest in U.S. history.

“A warm winter means less stress on bee colonies and may help them be more resistant to pathogens, parasites and other problems,” said Jeff Pettis, co-leader of the survey and research leader of the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) Bee Research Laboratory in Beltsville, Md. ARS is USDA’s chief intramural scientific research agency. University of Maryland research scientist Dennis vanEngelsdorp was the co-leader of the survey.

Among beekeepers who reported losing any colonies from any cause, 37 percent said they lost at least some of their colonies without finding any dead bees. The absence of dead bees is one of the defining symptoms of colony collapse disorder (CCD), a serious problem that beekeepers began facing in 2006. Since this was an interview-based survey, it was not possible to confirm that these colonies had CCD or if the losses were the result of other causes that share the “absence of dead bees” symptom.

“Tracking CCD continues to be complex,” Pettis said. “Despite several claims, we still don’t know the cause of CCD.”

Almost half of responding beekeepers reported losses greater than 13.6 percent, the level of loss that beekeepers have stated would be acceptable for their operations. Continued losses above that level threaten the economic sustainability of commercial beekeeping.

A total of 5,543 beekeepers, who manage nearly 15 percent of the country’s estimated 2.49 million colonies, responded to the survey.

A complete analysis of the survey data will be published later this year. The abstract can be found at: http://beeinformed.org/2012/05/winter2012/.

More information about CCD can be found at: http://www.ars.usda.gov/News/docs.htm?docid=15572.

Source: Kim Kaplan, USDA-ARS
Friends of the Bee Fund Contributions

The following ABF member contributed to the Friends of the Bee Fund during the month of March 2012. These donations enable us to fund educational programs and services that will benefit ABF members and the American beekeeping industry.

- Barry Thompson, Md.

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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Greetings beekeepers! Spring has sprung and the beekeeping season is officially underway. At home, we have already installed packages, and we are beginning the process of making divides and installing new queens. I have even had the opportunity to practice some of the grafting techniques I learned in Mississippi! In between all of the beekeeping activity at home, I have promoted the industry at home and throughout the country.

If you recall from my last newsletter article, I successfully hived a swarm in the Houston area in March. When I returned home from that trip, my first order of business was to create a short video highlighting the process. Using photos and video from the swarm capture, as well as some from previous swarms, I put together a video that is posted on the American Honey Queen YouTube channel. You can view it, too! Just search AmericanHoneyQueen on YouTube.

On March 21, I had the unique opportunity to teach my teachers when I gave a school presentation to students and staff at my childhood elementary school! I spoke to 100 students during two presentations at William Penn Elementary School in Monongahela, Penn. Many of the students had visited a nearby farm on school field trips, and they were excited to learn that the honey bees in the observation hive there belonged to me and my family. What a great way to connect with the kids!

On April 12, I visited St. Patrick Parish in McKeesport, Penn., to give a short presentation about honey to the ladies of the Christian Mothers group. Many of the women had been using honey for years, but were not sure of how it was actually produced. After the presentation, everyone learned something new about honey.

I traveled to Puyallup, Wash., to stay with hosts Marlene and Perry Bartram and work with the Pierce County Beekeepers Association during the Puyallup Spring Fair, April 16-23. I attended a board meeting of the Pierce County Beekeepers Association, which was my first evening in Washington. I met with many of the members primarily to answer their questions about the feasibility of a local honey queen program in the state of Washington. The beekeepers in Washington are highly motivated and supportive of a local pilot program in the next year, with the goal of creating a statewide honey queen program and providing a candidate for the American Honey Queen position in the next three or five years. What wonderful news! I wish them luck in developing their programs.

I also visited a classroom at the University of Puget Sound, where I spoke to a group of college students receiving apprenticeship training as part of Washington State’s Master Beekeeper Certification. The instructor put my knowledge to the test as I was paired with a teammate and asked to design a five-hive apiary. We raced against another team to include aspects necessary for a successful apiary: a southern exposure;
a windbreak; shade; water source; a sturdy perimeter fence, etc. Afterwards, I spoke with the students about my own beekeeping experiences, as well as my role as American Honey Queen. I believe that many of these young people will be very successful in attaining Master Beekeeper certification in the future.

During the Puyallup Spring Fair, I worked with members of the Pierce County Beekeepers Association at their booth and answered questions before moving to the nearby stage to give an hour-long presentation about honey bees and beekeeping. I attended the Fair Foundation’s Spring Fling on the first day of the fair. The Puyallup Fair Foundation routinely offers scholarships and funds a traveling farm exhibit that brings agriculture education to urban students. I spent the next three days working at the Puyallup Spring Fair with the Pierce County Beekeepers Association, giving daily talks about honey bees.

To round out my trip to Washington, I headed east to Yakima to visit a commercial beekeeping operation headed by beekeeper Eric Olson. Eric has been experimenting with his hives by placing them in cool storage for the winter. By regulating the temperature of the hives and the amount of carbon dioxide they receive, he has been able to reduce his losses dramatically to roughly 1 percent annually! It was a pleasure to visit his operation and learn more about large-scale hive management.

As I head back to Pennsylvania, I look forward to a solid week of local promotional opportunities. If you would like to invite the American Honey Queen and/or the American Honey Princess to your next event, please contact program chairperson Anna Kettlewell at 414.545.5514 or honeyqueen99@hotmail.com to schedule a visit. As always, you may visit our blog at www.buzzingacrossamerica.com or “like” us on Facebook by searching for the American Honey Queen Program page. Check back in the next edition of the newsletter to see where I buzz off to next!
I have been enjoying the beautiful early spring weather here in the Midwest, but I also have had many opportunities to promote the beekeeping industry in Wisconsin, Minnesota and Connecticut!

On March 13, I travelled to Madison, Wis., to attend the Wisconsin Women in Agriculture Brunch at the capitol. Before the brunch, I had an in-studio radio interview with Pam Jahnke, one of Wisconsin’s top farm reporters. The eight-minute interview aired live on seven stations across Wisconsin, generating approximately $5,840 in free publicity for our industry. At the brunch later that morning, state representatives, senators and legislative staffers consumed products from across Wisconsin, including different meats, cheeses, fruits and, of course, honey! I passed out cranberry oat honey bread and blueberry buckle (this recipe is found in our 2012 recipe brochure) with the 2012 Wisconsin Honey Queen, Sarah Rushfeldt. We had the opportunity to thank many of the legislators who supported the standard of identity for honey bill that was recently passed in Wisconsin, as well as to talk to them about the importance of honey bees to agriculture. Agricultural days at the capitol similar to this one are held in several states across the nation. Consider inviting the Queen or Princess to yours in order to help raise awareness of the importance of honey bees among these important officials. I thank Kevin and Becky Mehringer for hosting me on this promotion!

From Wisconsin, I flew to Connecticut and had wonderful new opportunities to promote the industry on the east coast! One of the many highlights of my trip was attending the “It’s a Bug’s World” event in Hartford. This event was presented by the Entomology Society of America and gave families the chance to learn more about many different insects, including the honey bee! Around 250 people came through during the day-long event, where I gave two presentations about the industry, worked by an observation hive, and handed out samples of blueberry and wildflower honeys. I also had the opportunity to speak with the president of the Entomology Society of America, Dr. Grayson Brown. It was a fantastic event! Another highlight in Connecticut was a visit to the Massaro Community Farm, where I spoke with new beekeepers about the American Beekeeping Federation (ABF) after a workshop that was designed to help beekeepers learn how to assemble new equipment. I thank Ted and Becky Jones for being wonderful hosts during my stay in Connecticut and for arranging my promotions!

After returning to Wisconsin, on March 25, I attended two spring beekeeping meetings in my area: the Western District of the Wisconsin Honey Producers Association in La Crosse; and the Ridge and Valley Beekeepers Organization in Seneca. Between the meetings, I spoke to 57 beekeepers about my travels and the benefits of being a member of the ABF!

On April 12, I crossed the border into Rochester, Minn., for a day of promotions. I spoke to 122 students in two schools, and I also attended the Rochester Bee Club meeting. At the meeting, I presented to 82 beekeepers about my role as the American Honey Princess and my travels up to date. I also encouraged membership in the ABF and raffled a free one-year membership to the members. I thank Russ Young and the Rochester Bee Club for inviting me to speak at their fantastic meeting.
Throughout April, I visited several schools in my local region. I presented in four schools, reaching 504 students through nine presentations. I also presented to the Seneca 4-H Club and encouraged 34 members to try beekeeping as a 4-H project. I also urged them to try using honey in their diets, and we made honey punch to show the diversity of using honey! I also was featured in seven newspaper articles throughout Wisconsin. I conducted two phone interviews and one in-person interview. These interviews resulted in 128 inches of print, generating approximately $5,839 in free publicity for our industry.

I encourage you to invite your friends to “like” the American Honey Queen Program page on Facebook. Alyssa and I will be very busy promoting the industry in these upcoming months, and this is a great tool to use to keep up with us in real time! It is not too late to contact Anna Kettlewell at honeyqueen99@hotmail.com or 414.545.5514 to invite Alyssa and me to events.

Princess Danielle speaks with State Representative Mark Radcliffe about the importance of honey bees to Wisconsin agriculture.

Have You Caught the Buzz?

Sent via e-mail monthly to all ABF members, ABF E-Buzz is a key member benefit and is published to inform members about ABF activities, as well as key happenings in the beekeeping industry. If you haven’t been receiving the newsletter, please be sure to contact the ABF office at info@abfnet.org or 404.760.2875 to ensure we have your most up-to-date contact information.

Also, if you wish to contribute content to the newsletter, please contact Tim Tucker, ABF E-Buzz editor, at tuckerb@hit.net. We welcome your submissions!
A recent report from Jill Richardson from Alternet explained that another difficulty is that almost a third of agricultural scientists reported that their research was funded by private industry. Many individuals also move into the revolving door between research, government agencies and the corporate world. This tends to make for science that is not necessarily bad, but needs to be viewed from the points of interest of those funding the research.

While there have been several scientific reports out lately affirming this correlation between pesticides and colony losses, we need to be cautious before announcing to the media that neonics are the “cause” of CCD. It is much more complex than that and more studies need to be done with the understanding of the complexity of the honey bee super organism and the synergies involved and that is very complex. I know that some are doing this work and hopefully real answers are beginning to form.

We need to examine and understand the sub-lethal effects in an effort to not further the ignorance that is perpetuated by false information. First and foremost, we need to educate ourselves to make sure our research is being done with the perspective of the beekeeper included and that we know how to ask the right questions to determine the quality of the research being done. In this fight, beekeepers are super organisms just like the honey bee.

Individually we cannot know enough or come up with enough money to prove that the sun will come up tomorrow. We have to organize and assume our individual chores to find the correct answers. It will take all of us, working together with other stakeholders who share our common goals to effectively meet the challenges that we and our bees are facing. You need to get involved and you need to get every beekeeper you know participating in your local, state and national organizations. Only by putting together all of our efforts and resources will we and our bees survive.

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Congratulations to the following ABF members that have reached milestone years during the months of March, April and May 2012:

10 Years
Linda Graham, Wis.
Brian Kulling, Mich.
Keith M. Lazar, Mich.
Robert E. McDonell, Ill.
Roger A. Stephenson, Utah
Tim Tucker, Kan.
Glen Wollman, S.D.
Paul Ziehli, Wis.

15 Years
Kevin French, Mass.
Michael Kliks, Hawaii

15 Years (cont.)
Eugene Linskens, Wis.
Robert Lohse, Calif.

20 Years
Eric Evenson, Neb.
Joan Gunter, N.D.
Robert Harrison, Mo.
Gerald J. Hosterman, Ariz.
Jim Oakley, Calif.
Stephanie Pomeroy, Iowa
Douglas Schmitz, Iowa
Virginia Webb, Ga.
Jerry Spate, Mich.

25 Years
Benjamin E. Chadwick, N.H.
Lawrence A. DuBose, Ill.
Anthony M. Jadczak, Maine
Doug Ruby, N.D.
Daniel L. Rudebusch, Texas

50 Years
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**Queenline Glass Honey Jars**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Size of Jr</th>
<th>Carton Weight</th>
<th>Lid Style</th>
<th>Order Number</th>
<th>Ship Weight</th>
<th>Price Per Carton</th>
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<td>12</td>
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*We reserve the right to substitute lids should the style you requested not be available.*

**Classic Plastic Honey Jars**

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<td>1 ½ pounds</td>
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<td>M01153</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Specify red or yellow caps. If none specified, yellow will be sent.*

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Note: Plastic containers may ship at individual weights listed not combined weights. All prices are subject to change.
From the Auxiliary

by Shelley Rodenberg, ABF Auxiliary President

Spring in just finishing up and summer is coming full force. I hope you all have your bees moved in or on their way to their summer yards. We had a very mild winter in Montana, and we are hoping for rain and the warm, shining sun for this summer. Just a quick reminder – now is the time to snap some photos for the annual photo contest!

Here are a couple of more recipes to try:

Honey Taffy (sucking candy)
by Ellen Sundberg

- 2 cups sugar
- 2 1/2 cups HONEY
- 1 2/3 cups water
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 2 tsp. vanilla

Combine sugar, HONEY, water and salt. Cook rapidly to 280 degrees F. Do not stir while cooking. Stir in vanilla. Pour into buttered pan to cool enough to handle. Pull until light color. Draw into ½-inch diameter rope. Quickly cut into ½-inch lengths using kitchen shears with blades rubbed in butter. Wrap each piece in heavy waxed paper. Makes 2 to 2 1/2 pounds.

Date-Filled Cookies
by Ellen Sundberg

- 1/2 cup butter
- 1 cup HONEY
- 2 eggs
- 2 tbsp. cream
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 3 cups flour
- 1/4 tsp. soda
- 1/2 tsp. salt

Cream butter and HONEY until fluffy. Add eggs and beat well. Mix flour, soda and salt. Chill dough. Roll thin and cut into circles. Fill with date filling (see below). Put second circle on top and crimp sides. Bake 350 degrees for approximately 8 to 10 minutes.

Filling:

- 1 1/2 cups chopped dates
- 1/2 cup HONEY
- 1/2 cup water
- 2 tbsp. lemon juice

Cook, stirring constantly until thickens. Cool.

ABF Auxiliary Officers

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