

July 25, 2014  
2014 Summer Issue



# the Queen City BUZZZZZZ

Regina and District Bee Club (RDBC)

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## An Apis Anecdote: Which Way is the Wind Blowing?

My bee yard is outside of Regina, on a grid road, past a dugout, by a pond with some trees around it. I have currently have 4 langstroth hives, all which seem to have done pretty good coming out of winter. After I write this article (July 2) I plan on going out to drop some more honey supers on them this afternoon. Perhaps I will bring back a first round of honey. The rainy derth of nectar and pollen seems to be subsiding now; fingers crossed...

I often find when I try to use my time in the bee yard in a way that is not rushed, I have a more enjoyable time and the bees to like it too. When I first get into my bee yard there are a couple things that are part of my routine. The routine allows me to get out of my hurried usual life and into a more peaceful place. Also, spending time on the plan makes less work for you in the long run, so why not check and figure things out before hand.

There are all the usual utilitarian things in the routine: like starting the smoker, checking the general status of the hives and looking to see what the workers are bringing in for pollen, etc. However one important thing I've been

asking myself lately as I start with my apiary assessment is: Which way is the wind blowing? I find that for honey bee husbandry, there is a lot to be gained from answering this question. I suppose for a daytime aerial creature such as the honey bee, the direction of the air would be a usual concern; but it is also an indicator for the bee keeper as well.

Many experienced keepers that are reading this will likely think I'll be talking about "drifting" next. I won't be - but to clarify for those that are new to this term, it is a word used to describe the effect of when honey bees enter a different hive than the one they left, which can be the result of the prevailing wind direction.

The wind direction tells me, first off, which path I should take when moving around the yard, and when I am opening the hives, which sequence I should use in "processing" the hives. Honey bees give off pheromones that cause changes in the physiology and behavior of other bees - these pheromones are one of the ways they communicate. By getting the bees upset in one hive upwind, you will alert the bees in downwind hives.

So, if the wind is blowing east I'll start with the most eastward hive and work my way west.

I know I give off a scent that they can detect as well. The bees seem to know when you are angry, fearful or had a party last night, and don't seem to like all 3 scenarios. As I walk through the hives doing my assessment, I try to remember to "send them love" - which gets me calmed down from any helter skelter thoughts I have at the time, and hopefully tells my buzzing friends that "all is good". If I navigate the yard in a way that reduces them picking up my scent, I'm convinced that they are less concerned about what am I doing (which might include entering their home to exchange comb, doing hive health checks, etc.).

Another thought on wind is that it is telling of an upcoming weather situation. You might be able to avoid oncoming rain (especially this year!) by noting where the weather is going. I've experienced this first hand where a clear to moderately cloudy sky turns into a shower - sending me scrambling to finish the current yard activities.

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## President's Report

Well July is now upon us. That sweet liquid gold we love so much is about to arrive. By now you should have your honey supers on or be thinking of doing it right away. Driving around the country I see lots of flowers are starting to bloom. A lot of the canola began to bloom this week, its yellow flowers are a welcome site after all the dark dreary rainy weather we have had. Hopefully everyone was able to stay dry through all the rain. I have heard of many stories of sewer backups in

Regina, hopefully the worst of the weather is behind us.

The last of the nucs were distributed last week. These were much later going out than usual, partially due to the weather. Hopefully everyone is enjoying their new bees. I remind anyone who doesn't have drawn comb to get their bees going on that. The club has a drawn comb program. The use of drawn comb will help your bees get established, help them draw out your new

foundation, and reduce the risk of your hive swarming.

The beginner bee course was a great success. It was fun to meet and talk to several new people interested in beekeeping. A big thanks to Linda for hosting. It was a good weather weekend for the event as the sun shone and the rain stayed away.

The field day also went well other than having to dodge rain showers during the tour. The hosts were very knowledgeable and put on a good day for us.

The honey drink contest winners were Joe and Gail Kleisinger with 1st and Conrad and Lauren Schultz with 2nd. Thanks to all the participants. The executive team is looking for ideas or suggestions for a fall social. If you have any ideas feel free to get a hold of us.

I would like to wish everyone a good and plentiful honey season and hope to see many of you at the fall social.

 Andrew



## Farewells



Alvey John Halbgewachs passed away at Sunset Extencicare on Saturday, February 15, 2014 following a long and brave battle with cancer at the age of 74 years. Alvey was born October 4, 1939 and was predeceased by his parents George and Minnie Halbgewachs; brother Donald and nephew Arley. He is survived by his loving wife of over 50 years Cecile; two daughters Carol Egert (Shayne) of Regina and Karen Campion (Kevin) of Calgary; three cherished grandchildren, Dylan, Ethan and Naomi. Alvey also leaves to cherish his memory three brothers, four sisters, sisters and brothers-in-law along with numerous nieces, nephews, extended relatives and close friends. Alvey owned and operated his own business for over 40 years in the automotive service industry until he retired and then continued on with his post retirement activity of being a beekeeper. He was an avid fisherman and hunter along with being a faithful Saskatchewan Roughrider season ticket holder for 30 years. The "Honey Man" made many friends over the years and loved nothing better than telling a good joke. His laugh was infectious. A special thank you goes out to all the doctors and nurses who assisted with Alvey's care; you always took time to listen to his stories. Funeral Mass will be held on Saturday, February 22, 2014 at 10:30 a.m. in Holy Cross Parish, 315 Douglas Avenue East, Regina, SK with Rev. Ken Koep Celebrant. Private family interment in Riverside Memorial Park. In lieu of flowers, the family respectfully asks that anyone who wishes may make donations, in Alvey's memory, to the Allan Blair Cancer Centre, 4101 Dewdney Ave., Regina, SK S4T 7T1 or Heart and Stroke Foundation of Sask., 279 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. N., Saskatoon, SK S7K 2H8.



Anton "Tony" Bistretzan: It is with heavy hearts and great sorrow that we announce the sudden passing of a husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather, Anton (Tony) Bistretzan on Monday, May 12, 2014 while working at the family farm. Tony was born June 22, 1937 in the district of Crystal Hill, SK and was the 11th of 15 children born to Gregory and Anica Bistretzan. Tony will be lovingly remembered by his wife Rita, daughters Donna (Paul), Karen and Diana (Michael) along with grandchildren Anthony (Chelsea), Amanda, Keara (Justin), Kalena (Kenton), Kaila (Drew), Rhett, Sahara and 6 great-grandchildren. Tony devoted 33 years to the Regina Fire Department, was a hard working farmer with a passion for clowning. Funeral Service will be held at 10:30 a.m. on Friday, May 16, 2014 at Avonhurst Pentecostal Assembly, 3200 Avonhurst Drive, Regina, SK. In lieu of flowers, those wishing to make a donation in Tony's memory may do so to the Regina Firefighters Burn Unit. Funeral arrangements entrusted to Paragon Funeral Services and Avonhurst Pentecostal Assembly.





# Field Day 2014

This year we changed things up for the field day and went to Over the Hill Orchards near Lumsden for a tour of their orchard.

The owners Dean and Sylvia Kreutzer have a lovely location overlooking a valley.

We started off with a bit of visiting before heading out for our one hour tour. They have cherries, apricots, almonds, plums, apples, grapes, haskaps, pears, raspberries, saskatoons, and strawberries. We even got to go inside their green house to escape the rain that came and

went in 10 minutes. While staying dry Dean showed us his special recycled planters that prevent the trees from becoming root bound.

After our tour we had fresh cherry pie with ice cream, coffee, and a taste of their cherry wine. It was delicious!

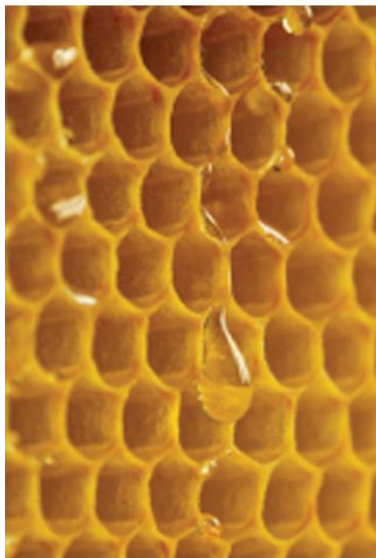
We then did our juice contest and some more visiting while eyeing up all the goodies in the freezers (and I sure did buy a cherry pie to take home).

A big thank you to Judi Gazda for making all the

arrangements and for everyone that came out.



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## Treats to Cool Off This Summer

### Honey-Yogurt Popsicle

- 2 cups - plain yogurt
- 1 cup - milk
- 1/3 cup - honey
- 1 teaspoon - vanilla extract
- 1/4 lb. - cherries, pitted and quartered
- 1/4 cup - blueberries



In a large bowl, stir together the yogurt, milk, honey and vanilla extract. Taste the mixture and add a little more honey if needed. Divide half the fruit among 8 1/2-cup popsicle holders. Add 1/4 cup of the yogurt mixture to each popsicle holder, then add the rest of the fruit. You'll need to press the fruit down a bit to distribute it evenly in the popsicle. Top off with more yogurt mixture if needed, leaving at least 1/4 inch of space at the top of the popsicle holder because it will expand as it freezes. Freeze the popsicles for several hours, until completely solid.

### Fruity Greek Yogurt Popsicles

- 1 cup - pitted cherries or 1/2 cup strawberries (or other fruit of your choice)
- 1 cup - nonfat Greek yogurt
- 2 tablespoons - honey

In a small food processor or blender, puree the fruit for 30 seconds to 1 minute. (Do not blend for too long or the puree will become too watery). In a measuring cup or bowl with pouring spout, stir together the yogurt and honey. Fold in about 2 tablespoons of the fruit puree. Taste and add more honey or fruit puree as desired. Pour fruit and yogurt mixture into popsicle molds, filling about 3/4 of the way. Add wooden sticks and freeze for at least 3 hours. To remove: run warm water over the bottle of the popsicle mold and gently twist and pull out the popsicles.



### Berry Stripped Pops

- 2 cups - strawberries
- 3/4 cup - honey, divided
- 6 - kiwifruit, peeled and sliced
- 2 cups - peaches
- 12 - paper cups (3-oz.) or popsicle molds
- 12 - popsicle sticks

Purée strawberries with 1/4 cup honey in blender or food processor. Divide mixture evenly between 12 cups or Popsicle molds. Freeze about 30 minutes or until firm. Meanwhile, rinse processor; purée kiwifruit with 1/4 cup honey. Repeat process with peaches and remaining 1/4 cup honey. When strawberry layer is firm, pour kiwifruit purée into molds. Insert Popsicle sticks and freeze about 30 minutes or until firm. Pour peach purée into molds and freeze until firm and ready to serve.



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## An Apis Anecdote: Which Way is the Wind Blowing? Cont'd

Some other things to consider: sudden strong winds tax foragers coming home; too much wind reduces foraging and can cool the hives to the point where the workers need to stay and group around the brood; a cool breeze helps the little HVAC insects on a hot day with their temperature regulation in their hives; if there is a lot of wind going into the hive it might be time to pivot the hive or find a better

spot for it; wind effects how the snow will drift in your yard and around your hives; other scents and bbq smoke/camp fires/etc will blow into your hives which might effect the colonies mood.

Lastly, and more metaphorically speaking, the wind direction can be regarded as a reminder of which way the compass is pointing when it comes to ones own direction.



 Conrad



## Solitary Bees

We all know the two most common types of bees: Honey bees and Bumblebees but how many of us know about Solitary bees?

Solitary bees are different in the sense that every female is fertile, and typically inhabits a nest she constructs herself. There are no worker bees for these species. Solitary bees typically produce neither honey or wax. They are immune from acarine and Varroa mites, but have their own unique parasites, pests and diseases.

Solitary bees are important pollinators, and pollen is gathered for provisioning the nest with food for their brood. Often it is mixed with nectar to form a paste-like consistency. Some solitary bees have very advanced types of pollen-carrying structures on their bodies. A very few species of solitary bees are being increasingly cultured for commercial pollination. Most of these species

belong to a distinct set of genera, namely: carpenter bees, sweat bees, mason bees, polyester bees, squash bees, dwarf carpenter bees, leafcutter bees, alkali bees, digger bees.

Solitary bees are often oligoleges, in that they only gather pollen from one or a few species/genera of plants (unlike honey bees and bumblebees which are generalists). No known bees are nectar specialists; many oligolectic bees will visit multiple plants for nectar, but there are no bees which visit only one plant for nectar while also gathering pollen from many different sources. Specialist pollinators also include bee species which gather floral oils instead of pollen, and male orchid bees, which gather aromatic compounds from orchids (one of the only cases where male bees are effective pollinators). In a very few cases only one species of bee can effectively pollinate a plant species, and some plants

are endangered at least in part because their pollinator is dying off.

There is, however, a pronounced tendency for oligolectic bees to be associated with common, widespread plants which are visited by multiple pollinators.

Solitary bees create nests in hollow reeds or twigs, holes in wood, or, most commonly, in tunnels in the ground. The female typically creates a cell with an egg and some provisions for the resulting larva, then seals it off. A nest may consist of numerous cells. When the nest is in wood, usually the last (those closer to the entrance) contain eggs that will become males. The adult does not provide care for the brood once the egg is laid, and usually dies after making one or more nests. The males typically emerge first and are ready for mating when the females emerge. Providing nest boxes for solitary bees is increasingly popular among gardeners. Solitary

bees are either stingless or very unlikely to sting (only in self-defense, if ever).

One Regina resident is doing their part to promote pollination without being a beekeeper by having a 'bee hotel' in her back yard. These 'bee hotels' are more common in Ontario but when she emailed her picture to the organizing group showing hers at 45% occupancy she was told that they haven't had that occupancy success there and were very excited to hear about it. Even though it isn't honey bees, more people trying to help with pollination is always a good thing.

 Keara





See something you like?

Have questions?

Do you have ideas or feedback?

Let us know!!!

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We're on the Web!

See us at:

[www.reginabeeclub.ca](http://www.reginabeeclub.ca)



## Geoff's Corner

*Have questions and need information about beekeeping in Saskatchewan?*

*Do you want to become a registered Beekeeper in our Province?*


*Contact Saskatchewan's Provincial Apiarist:*


Geoff Wilson (306.953.2304)


Email: [geoff.wilson@gov.sk.ca](mailto:geoff.wilson@gov.sk.ca)



## Honey Today

 Wholesale Honey was averaged at \$4.75/lb during June 2014.

 Retail Honey was averaged at \$6.32/lb during June 2014.

 Canadian Bulk Honey was averaged at \$2.25/lb during April 2014.

*Statistics taken from the National Honey Board*



## About Our Club...

The Regina and District Bee Club has been active in the City of Regina for over fifty years as a cooperative for ordering honey bees and as a network for education and information on beekeeping.

It is a priority to inform members about current issues in the beekeeping industry to ensure that a proactive role is taken with all industry issues such as bee diseases, mites and pesticides.

The Regina and District Bee Club participates in the Agri-Ed Show Case at Canadian Western Agribition. The focus is to educate children from Grades 4-6 about agriculture and food. Club members volunteer their time to speak about the

bees and beekeeping to well in excess of 10,000 visitors each year.

The Regina and District Bee Club in partnership with the Saskatchewan Beekeepers Association profile the bee keeping industry as a whole in the Trade Show area in order to:

- Promote and sell products of the hive;
- Inform visitors about the industry and its role in the Saskatchewan economy; and
- Develop a relationship with other Saskatchewan agriculture producers.

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Our next Newsletter will be in October. Deadline for submissions is October 10, 2014.

### Membership Benefits:

- A cooperative for ordering bees;
- At the annual meeting, guest speakers are invited to give presentations on current issues;
- Communication of industry issues to enable members to have a voice in provincial decision making;
- Hold "Field Days" to enable members to learn about beekeeping best practice methods; and
- Information and support system for fellow beekeepers.

