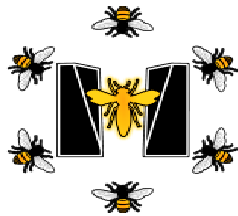


October 15, 2012
2012 Fall Issue



the Queen City BUZZZZZZ

Regina and District Bee Club (RDBC)

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Volunteers

I wanted to take a moment to acknowledge all the people that put in time helping out and giving back. We have a lot of members that go above and beyond. I'm sure I will forget to mention someone but the bottom line is those of you putting in those extra hours are appreciated. We have members like Doreen who go out to schools and talk to children. They teach the younger generation all about bees. Then there are the mentors who work with new beekeepers and give advice. Their time is

invaluable. Come this time of year we have our greatest need for volunteers as Michelle and Colette prepare to present a booth at Agribition. This is no small task and their efforts should be acknowledged. The membership will be contacted in the near future requesting volunteers to help. I urge everyone to get out and help out, it is a great experience and a great way to learn about bees. If you would like to volunteer contact Michelle Frischholz (781-4457) or

Colette Stushnoff (699-2599).



Andrew



Field Day



This year's field day was very enjoyable. Many thanks to Rick and Colette Stushnoff for hosting and showing off all their equipment. There were several methods of pulling honey demonstrated

including pads with "bee go" and "bee dunn", the tip off method, a bee escape, the brush, the tap, and a bee blower. Rope tying was also demonstrated with the

good old beekeepers knot. After doing the field stuff we returned to their plant where we toured the heat room, extracting room and warehouse.

There was a draw for a bee clock and then we all sat down to enjoy some delicious honey dishes the participants made.



Andrew



Using Alfalfa Pellets in Your Smoker

Last year several beekeepers had trouble with using alfalfa pellets (AP) as material in their smokers. This article is support for those of you that have trouble keeping the material smoking. The reason I use AP is that they last a long time, and they produce a cooler smoke (so you don't flame your bees). The reason why they burn cooler is that they contain moisture. Because of this, you have to use other materials with the AP.

Safety First. Make sure you have a water source to use on any burning material that you may have to extinguish if things go awry. Since you'll be starting a fire, also make sure that all combustible material is out of the way of the area where you will be lighting your smoker. Make sure to pay attention to wind direction, lest you flame all the hair off your arm or start something beside you on fire.

Grab all the things you're gonna need for the event. Including the safety things mentioned, include your hive tool, fresh AP, thin dry branches, matches, and newspaper (paper, not thick coated inserts). Assuming you used AP in the smoker last time, grab your smoker and empty the contents. Remove all the really burnt material and keep the AP that look like they can be reused. Use this material as the first layer at the bottom of the smoker once its empty.



If you are starting with fresh AP, follow the directions below, ensuring that you achieve an end goal of starting a burning base of burning material. As with all fires, the dry smaller stuff burns the easiest. Throw some twigs on the first layer of used pellets into your smoker. Light a bit of newspaper and throw that in too. Use your hive tool to move the burning material around and try and get the twigs crackling via the lighted paper.



Keep adding bits of paper as the existing paper burns so that continual fire is around the twigs. Throughout the process make sure to keep "puffing" your smoker (this is important – don't stop puffing). Add more twigs and paper and move the burning mass around until you hear the crackling. Basically make the material flame high, this will get the twigs crackling. Start adding any excess/used AP or new AP. As the burning mass continue to flame, you'll start the first layer

burning. Continue to add the new AP and puff that smoker. Your goal, is to get a good burning base going so that when you add more AP and twigs, they'll alight. If you find that you have a thick layer of AP on top of the burning mass below, without any twigs, make sure to add some twigs.



This is also important. You should have twigs within the layers of AP so that they will burn too. Now that your hand is sore from puffing the smoker for 2 minutes, and smoke is rising from the top layer of AP, it's time to close that smoker lid. Once closed, continue to puff the smoker. Test your smoking creation by stop puffing and see if the smoker stays smoking. During this test, the smoker may not smoke right away – give it a couple seconds. Filling the smoker until it's almost full, if done correctly, will last hours (4 hours has been the highest for me). You can top the smoker off with that little perforated circular metal piece so that the material doesn't fall out the end of the smoker when you are using it. Note that the paper/twigs and even the used AP will burn hotter than the new AP as they should be dry.

Generally though, the finished product should deliver a cool smoke that will not flame the wings off your bees.



If for some reason that smoker didn't stay lit, or it stops smoking later, dump a little out in a fire safe spot. Keep most of the material that you originally placed in the smoker inside it still at this point, but keep it tilted. Get some dry paper/twigs aflame in it, on top of the mass of AP and get a good flame going to start some more embers. The embers will get the AP going again.


 Conrad



President's Report

Greetings to all,
 So this production year is slowly coming to a close. By all accounts it was a productive year. The girls did a great job again. We held a summer afternoon field day at Richard and Colette Stushnoff's where various demonstrations of pulling honey were shown. This hands on demonstration was very interesting and beneficial. We also went through and discussed the different set ups for extracting. This revolved around different equipment and location of said pieces. A small lunch

with honey recipes was very enjoyable as well. Thanks to Richard and Colette for hosting and to the demonstrators for your expertise. Once again the Agribition is coming up in November and we will have our Sask Ed. booth and trade fair booth. Our Co-ordinators will be phoning around for workers so keep it mind.

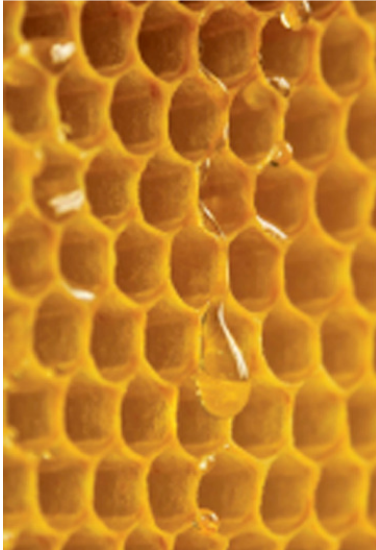
May the flow bee with you,
 Jeff Tholl
(Jeff wrote this a week before passing away)

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fort.trail@yourlink.ca
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In Search of the Perfect Bee - Part 2

In the first part of this article (last newsletter), I described the process of obtaining four queens from Bill Ferguson in Ontario. Bill raises Buckfast bees, a strain of *Apis Millifera*, developed by Brother Adam from Buckfast Abbey in England.

The Buckfast bee contains heritage from mainly *A.m. ligurica* (North Italian), *A.m. mellifera* (English), *A.m. mellifera* (French), *A.m. anatolica* (Turkish) and *A.m. cecropia* (Greek). The Buckfast bee of today also contains heritage from two rare and docile African stocks *A.m. sahariensis* and the *A.m. monticola*, but not the "Africanized" *A.m. scutellata*.



It took Brother Adam years of breeding and experimenting and travelling the world in search of different species, but eventually he was able to come up with the consistent results he was looking for. Because of the isolated sites of the apiaries on remote Dartmoor in south Devon, England, Brother Adam was able to maintain genetic integrity and develop the desirable traits he had determined.

I finally acquired my Buckfast queens in mid

July, so I was not sure how well they would do as far as honey producing this year. I split my original hive and queened it with a Buckfast bee. I re-queened a farm hive that suffered a drift spray of poison from a crop duster and I built two nucs with the remaining queens.

I only have a year's experience in beekeeping so I can't comment a lot on specifics of this breed, but I can certainly speak to the following points.

- Good honey producer? Well on the third pull this year, I got one of my heaviest supers from the re-queened hive that had re-populated with the majority being Buckfast bees.
- Prolific queens? The split, the re-queened hive and the nucs built up rather quickly and the queens were laying constantly after their introduction. The nucs needed another brood super added after about two weeks.
- Extremely gentle with low sting instinct? Definitely! If I began working the Buckfast hives first, there was hardly a need for smoke. There was never a fly-up response when the inner covers were opened and the population was docile and pleasant when frames were removed and checked.
- Produces little propolis or brace comb? I had

had a bit of a problem this year with the other hives producing lots of brace comb on some new foundation that I added, but the Buckfast did not create that problem. As far as propolis, I didn't notice any more or less than the other hives.

- The queens definitely slowed laying and brood rearing ceased in late fall
- Highly Tracheal mite tolerant? Can't say as I don't do autopsies on my bees, but when I did a mite test this fall, my count was extremely low. The Buckfast hives and nucs had one, one, zero and zero, and that was with two tests each just to make sure I was right the first time.
- Overwinters well and does well in cold, wet spring? Can't say as that is for this winter and next spring to determine. But their stores going into winter are extremely abundant and neatly capped.

So there you have it – part two is a cautious success for me right now. I like these bees. They are very gentle and easy to work. If they winter well and start strongly in the spring, I'll be ordering more queens and re-queening the

rest of the hives with Buckfast.

For now, everyone is wrapped up and hopefully staying warm and well-fed. I'm pretty happy with my experiment this year and grateful for the very necessary help from my mentor Andrew Hamilton, great advice from Colette and Rick Stushnoff and information and permits from Geoff Wilson.

If you are interested in further information about the Buckfast Bee or Brother Adam, here are some links: *Beekeeping at Buckfast Abbey by Brother Adam – Northern Bee Books – ISBN 0-907908-37-3*

<http://www.fergusonapiaries.on.ca/>
<http://www.buckfast.org.uk/site.php?use=bees>



Robin

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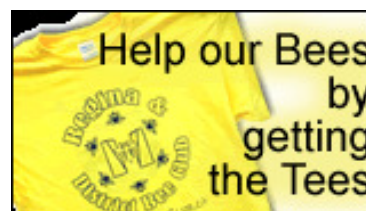
Bumble-Headed Beekeeper

Most people don't consider keeping thousands of tiny bugs that can swarm and sting in their yards as a hobby. I don't really blame them. Never being one of those types that is afraid of bugs, I didn't give it a second thought. The experience didn't scare me in the slightest which, upon reflection, I wish I had been more prepared. Luckily no fatal mistakes were made. At least none that were fatal to her royal highness. Talking to more experienced folk definitely quieted my fears and answered the endless questions I had. Living in a place where there were no other beekeepers for over an hours drive didn't help. It almost felt like I was a 5 year old when I confronted my ever so

accommodating and patient mentor with all the questions, but no question is a stupid one. Soaking up all the information is the hard part. I had heard something about skunks eating bees and didn't take it very seriously. Mistake. To my dismay one day a baby skunk was eating the bees. For how long, and how many of its family members had also been feasting, we do not know. The bees took a little longer than normal to recover and the effect was seen in the amount of honey we harvested. That lesson was learned. Fortunately for me, that was the worst thing I encountered in my first year keeping bees. I enjoyed the learning aspect of everything and even more

so, I enjoy the honey. Nothing about it feels like a chore and so long as I can say that, I will keep watching over the thousands of bees doing all the hard work. I still consider myself practically clueless. It's a good thing they know what they are doing. Trying to re-queen a new colony next year will be an interesting new project to take on.....

 Erin



Would you like a T-shirt? Trade Show booth and Agri-Ed Volunteers will receive a discount!!!!



You can order a subscription to the ABJ on your 2013-14 Membership



SBA Convention

The SBA's annual convention is in November from the 28th to the 30th. If you can come I would do so. This is where all the provinces commercial beekeepers go to hear great speakers and industry updates. There are many displays setup for the different industry equipment suppliers. The club will have a representative there and they will bring back some notes to our AGM in March, which is on the 15th (we'll remind you again about our AGM later).

 Andrew



Jeff's Obituary

JEFFREY THOLL

May 5, 1959 - October 8, 2012

It is with great sadness and heavy hearts that we must say goodbye to Jeff, a dear husband, father and grandfather. Jeff died suddenly on Monday, October 8, 2012 at the age of 53 years. He is survived by his loving wife Paulette (nee Gorniak); his three sons: Nolan (Tamara) and their family Xavier and Alexandria, Clint (Angie) and their family Hayden and Kenna, and Jared (Catherine); his mother Bernadette; his brothers and sisters: Celine Holloway (Ron), Toni Joy (Perry),

Alma (Kirby), Hardy (Allison), Victor (Tamara), Karla Ruggieri (Rodrigo); his father-in-law and mother-in-law Paul and Pauline Gorniak; sisters-in-law Shirley (Henry), Daphne and Patricia and their families. He is also survived by his nieces, nephews and cousins. Jeff was predeceased by his father Herb in 2009. The funeral mass will be celebrated in the St. Pius R.C. Church, Windthorst, SK, on Saturday, October 13, 2012 at 11:00 a.m. Prayers will be held in the church Friday evening at 7:30. Interment in the

parish cemetery. If friends so desire, contributions to a charity of their choice may be tokens of remembrance. Online condolences may be made at www.tubmanfh.com



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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



Honey Today

 Wholesale Honey was averaged at \$4.18/lb during Aug. 2012.

 Retail Honey was averaged at \$5.59/lb during Aug. 2012.

 Bulk Honey was averaged at \$1.67/lb during April 2012.

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 January. Deadline for submissions is Dec. 20, 2012.

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.

