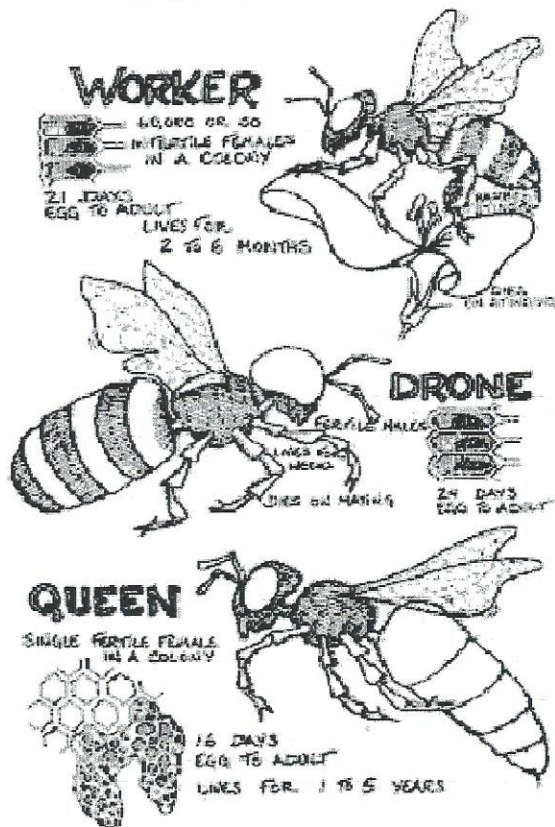


1997 Honey Harvest

All three hives made it through winter into March. Unfortunately one hive died in April: the swarm hive which had been the strongest hive last year.

In April we ordered more bees to replace the lost hive. They arrived in May. Unfortunately, the Queen was dead!!! We did not know what to do, because bees depend on the pheromones produced by the Queen. Without the pheromones



present the bees are in anarchy: they can't get organized to accomplish all the complex, cooperative tasks they need to be successful. We called York Bee company in York, Georgia to ask what to do. The boss himself,

Mr. York, said to just go ahead and put the dead Queen in there. He said they probably would not notice the Queen was dead, but would get organized and go to work. By the time they figured out the Queen was dead, we would have a new living Queen to replace the dead one. We were skeptical about this but it seemed to work. (A clever friend of mine remarked, on hearing this story "Why not? It's been working in Russia for years.")

On August 31st (Nina's birthday), we harvested the honey. There were five full supers of honey. Two we extracted and put into honey bears. One we put on the Russian hive because it seemed a little weak. Two we put in the basement so they are ready to put on the hives in March if the honey stores are getting low.

The bees were increasingly furious about our theft of their hard earned honey. (Normally we harvest earlier in the summer when the bees are more docile.) Their buzzing got louder and higher pitched as we went along. By the time it had gone from a dull soft hum through a loud roar to a high pitched scream, the bees were stinging me through my gloves and bee suit. Tom stepped forward and told me to go walk off the bees and he would finish up.

1997 Honey Harvest

I walked in and around our big Scotch pines in our front yard along the road in a kind of serpentine so the pine needles would gently brush the bees away. This takes patience but is so much better than being stung, that it is kind of relaxing. After a few minutes I noticed that Tom, too, was meandering among the pines, having been stung also, more than I. Fortunately, no one drove by. By the way, did you know that IOWA stands for Idiots Out Walking Around?

There we were, humbled by creatures a fraction of both our weight (for sure) and our intelligence (debatable).

But humility is a valuable trait, if painful to come by. Our world would be a better one if there were more humility amongst her inhabitants. Think of Mother Theresa (had it) and Saddam Hussein (needs it).

Mother Theresa said " We can do no one great thing. Only many small things with great love." What a great attitude for all of us worker bees in our various daily pursuits.

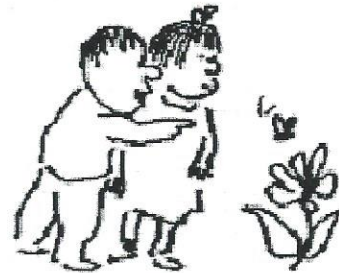
By the way, next time I get a queenless bee colony in the mail, I think I'll just forward it on to Iraq.

nWe hope you have a wonderful Christmas and a Happy, Successful New Year, with just the right amount of Humility thrown in.

With Love,

Lyse and Tom

C D B !



D B S A B-Z B.