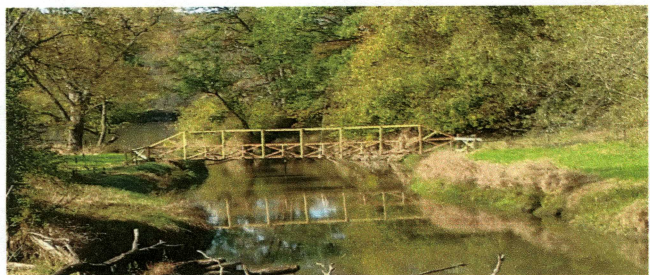




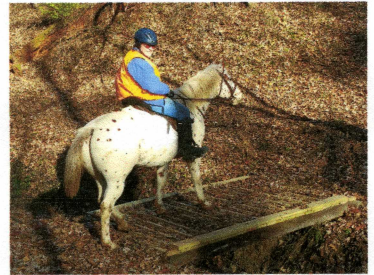
Honey Letter 2017



Recently, I have been intrigued by the concept of bridges in various forms. First, Tom built a beautiful 64 foot long single person-at a-time footbridge. Unfortunately, it got a bit cattywampus and so it was rebuilt and rehung across the creek using cables above, cables on on all four sides and steel pilings below. It will greatly help the boy scouts and other travelers on the Cedar Valley River Trail that traverses our property.



A few weeks later, Tom built an equestrian bridge across a small creek, using re purposed old railroad ties with strong planks and evenly spaced raised ridges to keep the horses hooves from slipping. It is cabled to the bank so it does not go to St. Louis with the next gullywasher.



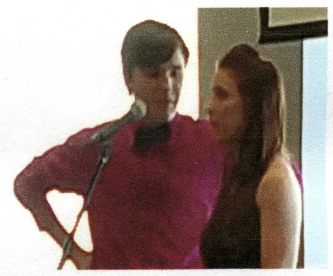
I was nudged by the concept again when I was reading about an unusual form of hive, called a top bar hive, that allows the bees to hang combs from single bars without any frame. In this type of hive, it is necessary to check frequently for the bridges the bees build between parallel combs. Once the combs are bridged, it becomes impossible to lift them out. A photo shows an inner hive cover that our bees had access to. The comb has been removed but you can see from the crazy pattern left behind, that bees like to build bridges between their combs.



At the annual meeting of the Iowa Honey Producers, I was once again delighted by the easy comradery between very diverse and complete strangers who only have beekeeping in common. Another kind of bridge that allows conversation to flow freely.

I have been thinking about Red Cedar Chamber Music, a group of the world's finest chamber musicians who collaborate with other artists, commission and premier new works. They perform in many typical main stage concert venues, but I first saw them play at one of their many rural outreach performances, at a small church in Tipton. And again at another small rural church. Another bridge.

Music is a bridge in any form, from a fiddle club playing in a coffee shop to a Show Choir playing in front of other cheering schools. Thank you Annie Savage and Robert Williams at Liberty High School!



Aubrey and Annie at the Mill Beau and friend sing at Liberty

In these divisive times, unfortunately we cannot always build bridges. But I observe that music, working with bees, hiking and reaching out to fellow human beings always makes us feel enriched. In fact, we could spend "every darn penny" on music, fellowship, and our beautiful surroundings and be well off!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!
Aubrey, Beau, Tom and Lyse

