



# Honey Letter 2010



We have not yet resumed our beekeeping but have kept up on what is happening in the beekeeping world. It seems that the Michael Pollan/slow food movement has motivated many novices to begin beekeeping. Whereas it used to be illegal to keep bees inside city limits, now many large cities, including New York have decided to allow beekeeping. Some cities, such as Minneapolis, will permit beekeeping as long as the prospective beekeeper has written permission from neighbors within several hundred yards.

The New York Times seems to be infatuated by bees which is wonderful as it regularly recounts the misadventures of the local beekeepers. For example the first harvest of a chef, new to beekeeping, revealed bright red honey that tasted of cherries, like a weird cough syrup. It turned out that the bees had not signed on to the local, slow food movement concept, because they were gorging themselves with the high fructose corn syrup and red food coloring dyed juices from a maraschino cherry plant in Brooklyn. Where there were only 3 or 4 beekeepers in a local organization there are now hundreds. There are sure to be some hilarious stories that will result.

Homeland Security, with its ability to rapidly identify biological material by analyzing unique proteins in samples, has gotten involved in the colony collapse investigation. There is some evidence that a combination of viral and fungal infections may be involved, though it is unclear whether they are causative of a colony's collapse or the result of some other as yet unknown insult.

Our own two sweet honeys, Beau and Aubrey, have kept us very occupied. They both are very busy with many activities. They are *often* very kind and thoughtful, and *sometimes* display wonderful manners. But they are little boys with boyish predilections and humor. Aubrey is reading Captain Underpants and the Big, Bad Battle of the Bionic Booger Boy. Beau just read Captain Underpants and the Wrath of the Wicked Wedgie Woman.

For a while they kept saying to us, "look!" We would reply, "look where?" They would say, "under there!" We would reply, "under where?" They would then convulse with laughter and say, "made you say underwear!"

The silver bell still rings for us and Santa's letters have been written and sent to the North Pole. Last year Beau wanted a full sized harp from Santa. We told him that was way too big. It was like asking for a car. Santa could not possibly carry such large presents. Etcetera, etcetera until Beau reluctantly chose something else.

Then the night of Christmas Eve, as we were going in to dinner at my mother's club in Florida, a harpist was playing in the courtyard. Beau stood quietly and watched. Instead of continuing on with her program, the harpist stopped playing and asked Beau if he would like to play her harp. She sent him to wash his hands and then gave him a fifteen minute lesson on her harp with lots of fun extras like letting him lean his forehead against it to feel the vibrations in the beautiful golden wood. The experience was stunning and poignant and I could not help thinking, tearfully, that Santa will decide for himself just what he will bring a little boy for Christmas.

We hope you have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Aubrey, Beau, Tom and Lyse

