



Honey Letter 2018



I am happy to report that my bees exceeded my expectations last winter. I went into the winter with four hives. Though I applied my recently acquired knowledge to monitor and treat for mites, applied my candyboards early winter, followed by pollen patties when the days grew longer in January and always kept an upper entrance and a cracked open hive cover for ventilation and humidity control, I still expected to have winter losses. So as usual I called my friends in Georgia in January to reserve two boxes of bees for early Spring shipment.

Instead, Tom and I found ourselves scrambling to make additional hives to house the two coming from Georgia, because, lo and behold, all four hives strongly made it through the winter!



Checking for buzzing in Jan



Spring

They were so strong indeed that one and possibly two of my hives cast swarms in late Spring! This is how bees reproduce themselves as an organism that consists of a colony of necessary individuals (like the BORG on Star Trek). If the swarm of bees had not been 60 feet up a tree on a hill hanging over a cliff, we would have recaptured them as we have done many times before.

Unfortunately they swarmed a day before I was going to split my hive for a friend. So I had to split another hive for him. Humility is a recurrent theme in beekeeping. I should have split both hives before they swarmed but I had no more hives to house them! Of my four strong hives, now two had swarmed and one was split, leaving only one strong hive to harvest later in the summer as I never harvest my first year bee colonies.

When I started beekeeping 30+ years ago it was all so simple. Buy a package, install it in a hive, give it enough room to raise bees and store honey and then just sit back and wait. You could go and visit the bees and chat with them. You could catch a swarm and start a new hive, but there was little to worry about. Unfortunately, this approach is no longer successful. In my beekeeping meetings and magazines they talk about “beehavers” versus “beekeepers”. The intensive monitoring and intervention separates the keepers from the havers and I try to convince as many of my beekeeping friends of this as I can.

On the contrary, with our two teenage boys, we are taking the opposite approach as much as possible. We “have” these two sons that we feed, shelter, and clothe, but other than requiring that they continue their violin studies until graduation, we are trying to get them to “keep” themselves as much as possible in terms of their schoolwork, activities and relationships. I like “having” teenage boys but every now and then my senses become overwhelmed and I must “keep” them again by recommending the virtues of cleanliness.



Aubrey splitting logs



Beau accompanying Liberty Choir with Mr. Williams



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Beau as Prince Abdullah (Aladdin) and Mr. Green (Clue)

Having teenagers also requires learning a foreign language that we are forbidden actually to utter aloud.

Here is a short glossary for your amusement, but use it at your peril.

Yeet: 1) exclamation, "yikes" 2) verb "Let's go!"

Extra: someone doing an unnecessary amount of extra work*

[* I am often accused of being extra, except where Thanksgiving dinner is involved-- there is no limit to the number of pumpkin pies or mashed potatoes that I can make and be extra]

Flex: display your talents or privileges to make other people feel jealous

Tea: knowledge about other people not well known, eg., gossip

Bet: you don't believe another, as in a challenge

Finna: getting ready to do something

Jush: self love

Easter Eggs: hidden features in a game for gamers to find

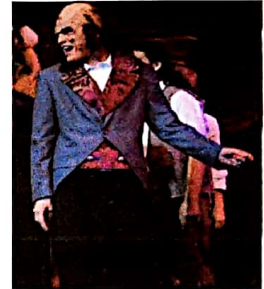
n00b: someone bad at a game

Well, enough of this jush, hope you don't think I was flexing! I am finna go outside and chat with my bees! Yeet!

(Yeah, the boys are right! Don't try to use these words!)



Aubrey in the sound booth



Beau as Geek (Side Show)



Aubrey fiddling at Gabe's



Beau as The General (Suessical)

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



Aubrey, Lyse, Beau, Edna, Tom, and Tracy in Florida

Visit www.CedarRunBees.com