

Bee Ranch Buzzes With Bee-Related Hobbies

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are floating roses and poinsetti candles, which are placed in a glass bowl with water. The flaming flowers make attractive table centerpieces and burn 2-3 hours.

Beeswax is not plentiful. It requires about eight pounds of honey for every one pound of wax made.

The average worker bee lives only six weeks. Honey bees gather only 1/8 - 1/4 teaspoon of honey during their lifetime.

Each type of honey has a unique flavor and color, depending on the flowers visited by the honey bees. More than 300 different varieties of honey range from lightly sweet to richly bold.

Rick maintains his full-time job as a mechanic. In addition to his beekeeping hobby, Rick also is restoring his grandfather's '49 Massey Harris tractor.

While Rick modestly denies that he has inborn artistic talent, his wife reminds him that he used to

draw pictures and cartoons to send to her instead of writing to her before they married.

They like to experiment with different molds and have used metal, ceramic, polyurethane, and rubber molds. Some of the molds Rick has made have six pieces.

In addition to molds, the Freemans have designed table favors for the Eastern Apiculture Society, which meets annually in a different state each time.

Although the Freemans started their honey extraction and beeswax processes in their kitchen, they soon learned that the jobs are best suited for places other than the family living area. They now have an outdoor shop dubbed The Honey House with a 30-frame motorized extractor and equipment for the beeswax craft.

They have purchased a large utility trailer to haul honey and craft items to shows. Upcoming shows where the Freemans will be selling their products include:

Myerstown Fall Craft Show, Oct. 4; Schuylkill Co. Fall Festival, Oct. 5; Leesport Craft Show, Oct. 11-12 and Nov. 29-30; and Ephrata ABWA Craft Show, Nov. 22.

The Freemans belong to Lehigh Valley, Montgomery County, and the Schuylkill County Beekeepers. Rick is vice president of the Berks County Beekeepers. Both Rick and Julie are directors of the Schuylkill County Fair Board.

In 1994, Julie won the state apple pie contest with a pie made with honey.

Since then, she has not entered because she believes in giving other people the opportunity. However, Julie continues to use honey in many of her recipes.

Some of the family's favorite ways to use honey are in honey peanut butter cookies, glazing sweet potatoes with honey and butter, and sweetening cooked carrots with honey. She also uses honey to sweeten barbecue sauce.

"The quicker, the better," Julie said of her favorite recipes.

Here is a "honey" of a recipe for using the last of the season's peaches.

EASY PEACH PIE

1 1/2 cups flour

1/2 cup shortening

1 teaspoon salt

Blend with pastry blender until mixture is the size of peas, add:

4 teaspoon ice water

Roll out pie dough for 9-inch crust.

Filling:

8-10 peaches

1/2 - 3/4 cup honey

1/4 heaping cup flour

Peel and slice peaches. Add honey and flour. Toss in bowl. Pour into 9-inch pie crust. Sprinkle with crumb topping:

Crumb topping:

3/4 cup flour

2 teaspoons butter

1/2 cup sugar

Combine ingredients with fork or pastry blender until finely

crumbed. Sprinkle on top of peaches.

Bake at 425 degrees for 30 minutes. Reduce heat to 400 degrees and bake for 30 additional minutes.



Julie experiments by using honey in many of her recipes. In 1994, she won the state apple pie contest, when she entered a pie made with caramelized honey at the Pennsylvania Farm Show in Harrisburg. Here, she holds a peach pie made with honey.

Cloister Apple Dumpling Festival Oct. 11

EPHRATA (Lancaster Co.) — Nothing could be better on a crisp fall day than a warm apple dumpling, a Pennsylvania German confection made of apples, spices and sugar all wrapped in dough. The historic Ephrata Cloister's annual Apple Dumpling Festival, October 11, offers the chance to enjoy these delicious treats. The first of the fresh, hot homemade dumplings comes out of the oven at 10 a.m. and the gathering continues until the last dumpling is sold.

"We made about 1,500 dumplings last year, and we're going to try for that many again this October," reports Shirley Bischoff, Ephrata Cloister Associates business manager.

Aside from the wonderful food and beautiful surroundings, the satisfaction of the day comes from helping to preserve the rich heritage of the Ephrata Cloister. Proceeds from the Apple Dumpling Festival support the "Back to the

Cloister Fund," an endowment used to purchase original 18th century artifacts created at the German religious community. Funds from the festival have helped to acquire items such as a manuscript music hymnal created in the mid-1700s, a collection of significant manuscript deeds, and a rare Cloister built cupboard.

Ephrata Cloister is located in the Borough of Ephrata, Lancaster County, on Route 322 at the intersection with Route 272. The historic site is open Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday from noon to 5 p.m. Guided tours present three of the historic buildings to visitors with additional structures open for self-guided visits. A family admission rate allows all members of a household to visit the site for one low price. For more information about Ephrata Cloister and the Apple Dumpling Festival call (717) 733-6600.

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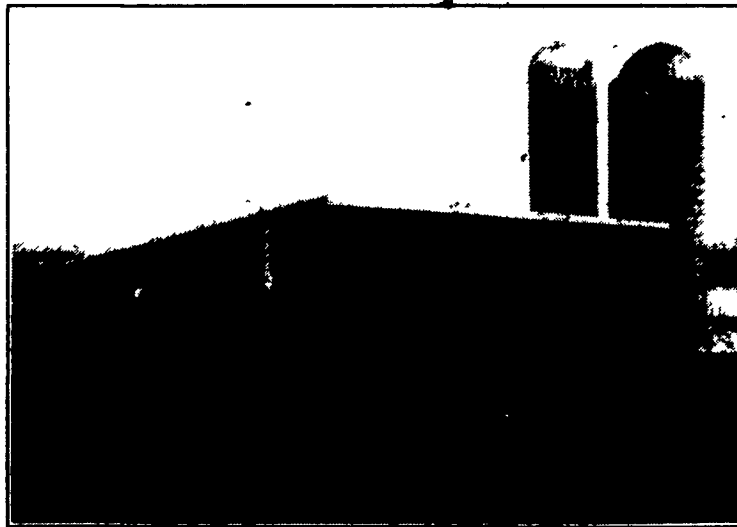
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