

Honey Sweetens Beekeeping Family's Prospects

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for purchasing raw honey have tripled.

When contemplating whether or not to purchase the Wampler business, Miller said that he was most wary of the marketing required.

"I don't consider myself a sales person or aggressive," he said.

But Miller has found local business customers easy to talk with and enjoys the marketing end.

The more taxing problem is moving honey, which is heavy.

Transporting the hives with a trailer and van required help, and even delivering the processed honey is not a task Kelly can handle.

Honey isn't easy to clean up, especially if there are accidents.

Kelly recalled a disaster that happened on the couple's anniversary. The couple was planning to celebrate by going out to eat. But about an hour before leaving, she stepped into the kitchen pantry and discovered 50 pounds of honey had drained out. The honey was several inches thick on the floor and had seeped into the basement. It took hours to clean up, scraping it into a bucket and using lots of hot water to wash away the stickiness. The floor boards needed to be replaced.



Tim and Kelly Miller label honey under the label Wampler's Honey and The Honeybee Shoppe. They specialize in alfalfa, buckwheat, clover, orange blossom, tupelo, and wildflower flavors.

Needless to say, the anniversary dinner had to be postponed.

"Looking back, it is kind of funny, but it wasn't at the time," Kelly said.

Miller said, "Some days I love working with the bees and think this is where I want to be (full time). Other times the bees are

nasty, and I ask myself, "Why am I doing this?"

One of those days happened this summer when he tried to retrieve a bee swarm on his property that he estimates hovered in a branch at least 50 feet above the ground. He decided not to suit up in beekeeper's protective garb because he surmised that he could easily attain the swarm. Otherwise the mesh could become entangled in the branches and it is very hot inside the garb during high temperatures.

But some of the bees crawled beneath his watch, and when they felt pinched, they stung him. After being stung 30 times, Miller retreated to the ground, suited up, and retrieved the swarm.

In retrospect, Miller said of his decision not to wear protective clothing, "That was dumb."

As a carpenter, I'm not afraid of heights," Miller said. "I've removed them from homes, buildings, and trees for other people."

Miller said in contemplating the decision to expand the bee business, he thought of his four children.

"I have a son and three daughters. What are the chances that my daughters can join my carpentry business?" Miller asked. "With bees, they can join in

that."

All the children help with some aspects of the business — mostly with bottling. The couple's six-year-old daughter shows the most affinity to work ing with bees.

"She's always there right up next to her dad," Kelly said of extracting the honey.

The children also help with bottling and labeling the honey and the beeswax products.

Kelly said that the handcream she developed contains 25 percent beeswax, which makes a very rich embollient. She knows of no commercial handcream that contains that much. Her customers include doctors and nurses who buy it for its healing qualities. Some call it 'Kelly's Miracle Cream,'" Kelly said. Those who have cracked skin on their hands say if they use the handcream, the cracks heal overnight. She also sells it to other beekeepers and to customers who hear about it word of mouth.

Kelly likes to experiment by adding color to candles. Candles made from pure beeswax are known to burn slower and cleaner, so her husband frowns on her dumping stuff into what he considers a perfect product. "He's a purist and I'm creative," Kelly said.

At this point, the Millers only place the bee hives locally and market locally. Miller is intrigued by the possibility of moving his hives to warmer states during the winter. Migratory beekeepers often travel to Florida and Western states during winter weather. Regulatory inspections when crossing state lines are mandated.

Because they have school-age children, Kelly doesn't see migratory beekeeping as a possibility. She said that she moved 20 times and attended 28 schools as a child, so staying in one place is important to her.

Then, again, she changed her mind before — from being skeptical of beekeeping to becoming a full-fledged promoter of honey and its products.



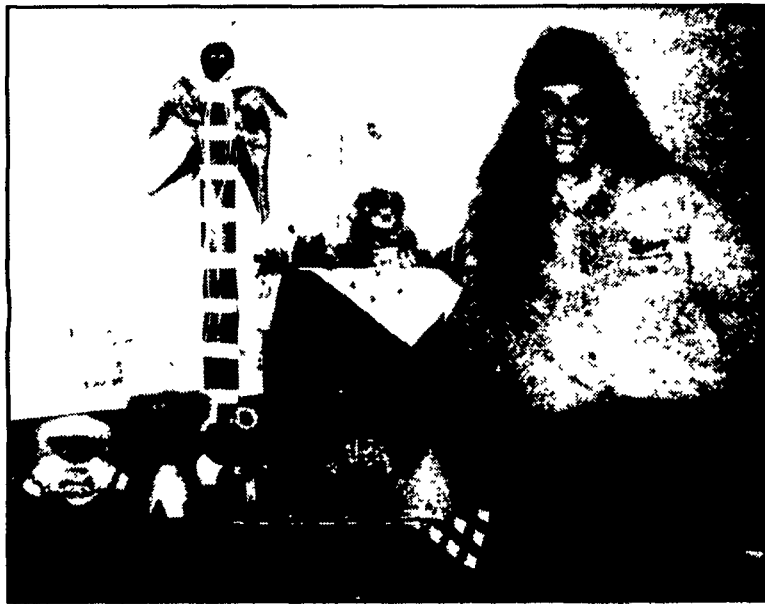
Six-year-old Julia Miller is fast preparing to become the next generation of beekeepers in the Miller family.



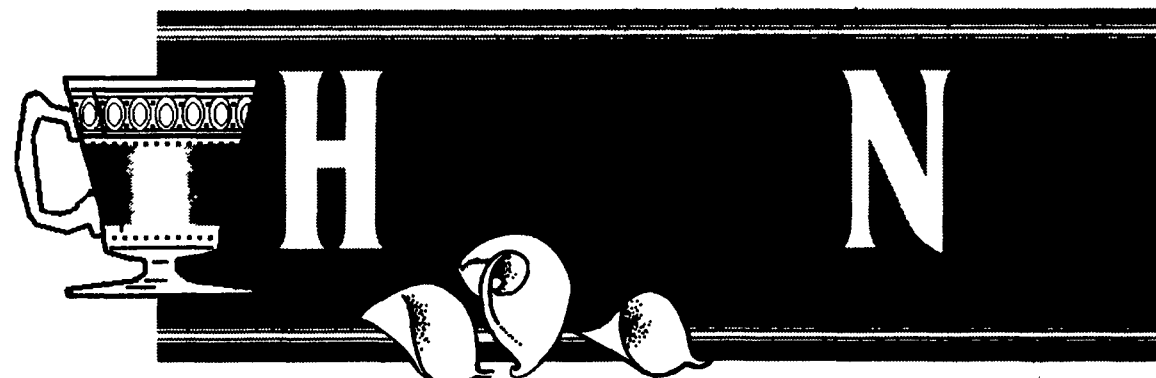
Sometimes more than honey is found in a hive. Here Caleb finds a snake.



Here is a basket filled with some of the items Kelly makes from honey and beeswax to sell in her Honeybee Shoppe.



Bee and honey items are everywhere throughout her home. Kelly Miller even stenciled a design on her walls.



This is some of the machinery used to process honey in the Miller's shop.

State Grange Announces Family Activity Winners

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — The Pennsylvania State Grange is a grassroots organization with approximately 20,000 members in 360 chapters across the commonwealth. The goal of the organization is to improve the lives of rural Pennsylvania through many vehicles including legislative action. The four-day session, lays the groundwork for legislative initiatives for the upcoming year. However, the 130th State Convention was not all work and no play for the more than 500 Grange members gathered in Washington.

The event featured many contest winners. The following Family Activities winners are listed in their respective categories by

placement, name, Grange and county.

QUILT BLOCK

Maple leaf design — pieced/patchwork: 1. Annis Davis, Fairview Grange. 2. Ruth Wallis, Canusarago Grange. 3. Evelyn Grant, Sugar Hill Grange.

Sunbonnet Sue or Sam — applique: 1. Annis Davis, Fairview Grange. 2. Shirley Swires, Scotch Valley Grange. 3. Carolyn J. Mantz, Central Grange.

Embroidered flowers or birds: 1. Shirley Swires, Scotch Valley Grange. 2. Florence Spencer, Watson Grange. 3. Florence Shaffer, Wills Grange.

QUILTS

Entirely hand quilted by an individual: 1. June Laurenceon, Canusarago Grange. 2. Pat Weir, Unionville Grange. 3. Mary Riddle, Scrubgrass Grange.

Entirely hand quilted by a group: 1. Mary Ann Buckley Family, Lincoln Grange. 2. Messiah Quilters, Canusarago Grange.

BABY QUILT OR WALL HANGING

Hand quilted: 1. Annis Davis, Fairview Grange. 2. Nettie Martsoff, Jefferson Grange. 3. Joyce Dobson, Unionville Grange.

Machine quilted: 1. Betty G. Layton, Honey Brook Twp. Grange.

BAKING

Filled cookies: 1. Janice Sticker, Gouletville Grange. 2. Nina Clawson, Bell Twp. Grange. 3. Mary Piddle, Scrubgrass Grange.

Ginger cookies: 1. Leroy D. Hoover, North Woodbury Grange. 2. Esie McElhinney, Hookstown Grange. 3. Alverna Hittchman, Haysfield Grange.

No bake cookies: 1. Amy Paul, Hillcrest Grange. 2. Vincent Genzad, North Woodbury Grange. 3. Dan Haagen, Walker Grange.

SWAG

Christmas: 1. Miriam Warren, Chester Valley Grange. 2. Annette Kramer, Pioneer Grange. 3. Rose Conrad, Pleasant Hill Grange.

Flowers: 1. Trudy Wigton, Pleasant Hill Grange. 2. G. Elaine Nilon, Frankfort Springs Grange. 3. Thelma McCormick, Eureka Grange.

Miscellaneous: 1. Joanne L. Heim, Trexlertown Grange. 2. Brenda Lengel, Virginville Grange. 3. Helen Weigle, Wills Grange.

WOODCRAFT

Candle holder: 1. Michael McElhinney, Scrubgrass Grange. 2. Bill Slusarczyk, Fair-

view Grange. 3. Glen Hoppe, Central Grange.

Lawn ornament: 1. Robert Fogle, Pleasant Hill Grange. 2. Alice Dietrich, Big Knob Grange. 3. Shirley Swires, Scotch Valley Grange.

Box or planter: 1. Bill Stawarczyk, Fairview Grange. 2. Clair L. Miller, Barnville Grange. 3. Eugene Conrad, North Woodbury Grange.

COMMISSIONED SWAG CREATION

Bees: 1. Bill Swires, Fairview Grange. 2. Corinne M. Koller, Virginville Grange. 3. James Gris, Schneidersville Grange.

Planters: 1. Carolyn J. Mantz, Central Grange. 2. Helenia Bourghety, Lawsville Grange. 3. Linda Waman, Chester Valley Grange.

Felt: 1. Deborah Kolpak, Chester Valley Grange. 2. Carline Reilly, Scotch Valley Grange. 3. Joyce Guzel, Pawnee Grange.

Recycled material: 1. Sarah J. Hower, Walker Grange. 2. Donna Atwood, Columbia-Gillett Grange. 3. Jane L. Adams, Kutztown Grange.

AFGHAN

Full size: 1. Julia H. Cribbs, Blairsville Grange. 2. Amelia Mitchell, Long Branch Grange. 3. Stony Point Grange.

Baby afghan: 1. Nancy J. Kerr, Carmichele Grange. 2. Margaret M. Stom, Pleasant Hill Grange. 3. Sharon D. Heck, Fleetwood Grange.

COTTON CROCHET THREAD

Dollies, centerpieces, table runners: 1. Adda N. Ramsley, North Washington Grange. 2. Gloria Fish, Mahoning Valley Grange. 3. Martha Bayne, Scenery Hill Grange.

NEEDLEPOINT

Embroidery: 1. Ruth Wallis, Canusarago Grange. 2. Shirley Swires, Scotch Valley Grange. 3. Joyce Guzel, Pawnee Grange.

Quilted cross-stitch: 1. Carol Kuehna, Mahoning Valley Grange. 2. Nettie Kelley-Baker, Buffalo Grange. 3. Brenda Wader, Hookstown Grange.

Crewel: 1. Trudy Wigton, Pleasant Hill Grange. 2. ShirleyAnn M. Lorch, Harmony Grange. 3. A. Elaine Cook, Brandywine Grange.

Plastic canvas needlepoint: 1. Carolyn J. Mantz, Central Grange. 2. J. Truscott, Hillcrest Grange. 3. Thelma McCormick, Eureka Grange.

STUFFED TOY CONTEST

1. Hilda Pflug, Big Knob Grange. 2. Nettie A. Kauffman, Ortesaunee Grange. 3. Shirley Swires, Scotch Valley Grange.