

Father, son are fascinated by bees' ordered society

By LOUISE OKRUTSKY

Gerald Judge was shy of his ninth birthday when he spent a summer working for a Washington, Michigan farmer who kept bees. It was during that summer that his fascination with the tiny civilization in the hives began.

Now, 52 years later, Judge's 12-year-old son Joe is well into becoming the second beekeeper in the family.

Together they keep 10 hives on the family's Farmington Hills property.

For Judge, beekeeping is a hobby that gives him more enjoyment than his insurance business. Son Joe earns his tuition for parochial school through the sale of natural honey to health food buffs.

Both are fascinated by the orderly society that keeps the hives humming.

"I like their order. They have a job for everyone and no one's on welfare," said Judge, who will teach beekeeping at Oakland Community College's Orchard Ridge Campus.

The drones give moral support to the hive. They keep the hive warm for their queen.

Each of the hives has its own smell from the queen bee, according to Joe. If a bee strays to another hive, guard bees will make sure the stranger is evicted.

DRONES ARE EXEMPT FROM such summary dismissal, Judge adds.

"Drones are defenseless. They don't have stingers. But they are welcome



in every hive. The workers are not."

Judge drifted slowly into his present collection of hives. He started with five hives but the number doubled as the duo caught more swarms of bees.

"We wanted the fellows to have a proper home," Judge said as he surveyed the wooden hives and their inhabitants.

His children also spurred him on to the idea of raising bees. They like sweets and the hive collection, which provides the family with honey, started at a time when the price of sugar was rising.

Working to keep his bees producing honey and his children's sweet teeth satisfied, Judge encourages dandelions to grow on his lawn.

"We have a bee pasture of dandelions," he said. "I hate to see the commercials for the chemical that destroys dandelions. The best honey comes from dandelions."

Honey comes from a variety of pollen sources. A jar of the golden sticky stuff will probably turn out to be a combination of pollen sources, like dandelions and apple blossoms.

LIKE OTHER CREATURES, bees sometimes must be fed by their owners. Judge feeds his little critters with a solution of three parts water and one part honey or sugar.

A jar of the solution will be placed upside down on top of the hive so the bees gather the food.

Besides a sweet treat, early man found another use for honey. When it was mixed with water and allowed to ferment, it became mead.

Mead can be made naturally during a wet spell when water gets into the beehive. When it starts to ferment, the hive begins to reel with drunken bees, according to Judge.

Wax and honey are gathered in the hive on beeswax strainers stretched on a wooden frame. Judge and Joe sometimes skip wearing the beekeepers' protective covering when they delve into the hive. They'll hold a drone gently between their fingers.

"I don't like going into the hives without a hat—my hair is so thick that the bees get into it," said Joe as he ran his fingers through his bushy, red locks. "They only see the thick hair and they think that I'm a bear."

JOE HAS FOUND another use for the drones. He delights in scaring the girls by letting drones crawl all over his body. He neglects to tell his audience, however, that the drones, according to his father, are defenseless.

"We let the bees crawl over us and we don't get stung because we know what we're doing," Judge cautioned.

The pair's expertise with bees comes in handy for other local residents during the spring. The police department calls them when a resident complains of a swarm of bees on his property.

Residents who are more fascinated with the creatures than frightened can learn the fine points of the craft in Judge's OCC class, which begins May 3 and finishes June 21. There is a class fee of \$25 and registration is still open.

Staff photos
by
Harry Mauthe



Clutching the tops of the wooden hives, Gerald and Joe Judge take a look at the Italian bees that they raise. That strain is reputed to be gentle. Judge's 10 bee hives are made from wood. Inside the hive (bottom), screens are filed away to catch the honey. Beeswax is used to make the angled screen which is placed on a wooden frame.



Scott Harmon, 7½, helps to hoe the Judge's dandelion pasture. Judge is convinced that the best honey is made from the pollen of the dandelion.

FARC schedules spring classes

If you're moping around because you were too late to register for classes at most community functions, don't despair.

Farmington Area Recreation Commission (FARC) has scheduled a multitude of classes for all age groups beginning May 10 at Shiawassee Elementary School, 30415 Shiawassee. All classes are scheduled for Thursdays.

For the younger set, three sessions of gymnastics will be offered for grades K-2 at 3:30 p.m.; grades 2-4 at 4:30 p.m.; and grades 4-6 at 5:30 p.m. in the Shiawassee gym. Each class has a \$4 price tag with sessions running until June 7.

Creative art for grades K-2 will be offered at 3:30 p.m. for \$4 in Room 6.

Guitar 1 for grades 3-6 is offered at 5:30 p.m. in Room 6 while guitar 2 is offered at 6:30 p.m. Class fee is \$6 for either class.

Modern jazz dance for grades 3-6 will be offered at 5:30 p.m. for a \$4 fee.

Ballet for grades 1-3 is scheduled at 3:30 p.m., while grades 4-6 students can take the class at 4:30 p.m. Leo-

tards or jeans are recommended for this \$4 class.

Karate for beginners and intermediate students in grades 2-6 will be taught at 6:30 p.m. in the gym for a \$6 fee.

Exploratory art for grades 3-6 is scheduled for 4:30 p.m. in Room 6 for a \$4 fee.

Teen and adult activities include disco dance; dried flower arranging; square dancing; and guitar.

Disco dancing is scheduled for 7:30 p.m. in the gym for \$6 for single persons and \$10 for couples.

Learning how to make a dried flower arrangement is on tap at 8:30 p.m. in Room 6 for a \$4 fee. This course is scheduled for four weeks only.

Square dancing will run from 7:30-9 p.m. in the multipurpose room for \$6 for single persons and \$10 for couples.

Two sessions of guitar are scheduled at 7:30 p.m. in Room 6 for guitar 1 and at 8:30 p.m. in Room 6 for guitar 2 (intermediate). Each course has a \$6 class fee.

Registration will be held at the FARC office, 31555 Eleven Mile, Farmington Hills, 48018; and pre-registration is suggested. Registrations will be accepted at the first class meeting if openings are available.

Millage committee announces meeting

The "Kids Still Count" millage committee, approved by the Farmington School Board at Tuesday night's meeting, announced plans for a rally-meeting at 10 a.m., May 14 at the administrative building of Farmington Public Schools, 32500 Shiawassee.

Co-chairpersons Mary Ann Reilly and John Bailey and treasurer Bud Pickett are leading the group, which supports the proposed millage increase in the June 12 election.

"We believe that the decision to support and improve our educational programs is one that no responsible member of the community can avoid," Bailey said. "We urge all Farmington area voters to take a good look at the facts our campaign will bring out, and we think people will agree that the money is needed."

Mr. Reilly urged all volunteers to attend the Saturday morning meeting. Permanent officers or those who would like to volunteer or support the committee should contact Bailey at 478-0775.



Agnes McInerney of Farmington Hills was recently presented to the Michigan League of Nursing. She currently is the director of Harper Hospital School of Nursing.



Thomas Gawn of Northville has been appointed assistant manager of New York Life Insurance Co.'s Detroit general office at 26555 Evergreen, Southfield.

Cop graduates

Thomas Daniels, of the Farmington Police Department's investigation bureau, recently graduated from Madonna College, with a BA in social science and criminal justice. A Novi resident, he has been with the police department for eleven years.

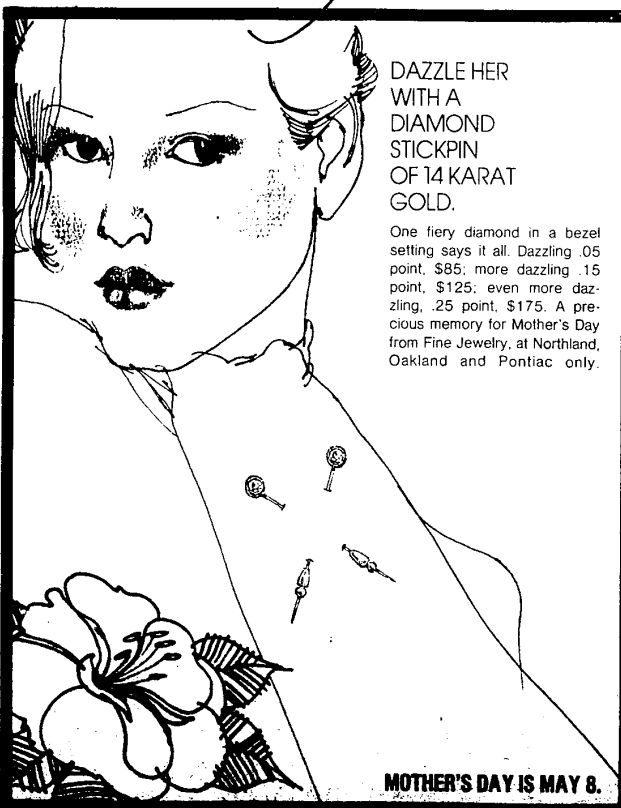
Reader wins appointment

Barbara Reader, of Farmington Hills, has been appointed to the Michigan Mental Health Advisory Council by Gov. William Milliken.

Scholarship is awarded

Victoria Seabrooks, a student of Our Lady of Mercy High School, Farmington Hills, was recently awarded a \$1,000 scholarship from the National Merit Scholarship Corporation at the 12th annual National Achievement Scholarship program for outstanding black students.

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MOTHER'S DAY IS MAY 8.

hudson's