

Episode 15 Mixdown PROOFED

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SPEAKERS

Guest 2, Stump The Chump, Amy, Jamie, Guest, Honey Bee

Jamie 00:05

Welcome to Two Bees in a Podcast brought to you by the Honey Bee Research Extension Laboratory at the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences. It is our goal to advance the understanding of honey bees and beekeeping, grow the beekeeping community and improve the health of honey bees everywhere. In this podcast, you'll hear research updates, beekeeping management practices discussed and advice on beekeeping from our resident experts, beekeepers, scientists and other program guests. Join us for today's program. And thank you for listening to Two Bees in a Podcast. In today's episode of Two Bees in a Podcast, we're going to be focusing on the importance of beekeeping literature, specifically, popular beekeeping journals, their importance to beekeepers, and the role that they play in bee management. To do that, we're going to interview Eugene Makovec who is the editor of the American Bee Journal. We're going to also interview Jerry Hayes, the editor of Bee Culture. The American Bee Journal and Bee Culture are our two largest beekeeping magazines or periodicals here in the United States, and we're going to talk to those guys in detail about their periodical, specifically. But Amy, I would argue that these things play a very important role in the life of any beekeeper, really around the world.

Amy 01:24

Absolutely. I agree. When I first started beekeeping, I guess I don't realize what resources I had available to me at the time. Lucky you listeners get all this information just given to you by us. Hopefully, you're listening.

Jamie 01:38

In my official opinion, we probably need to do a podcast, a greater podcast, an entire episode, just on resources for beekeepers. Again, we're highlighting today just a couple of magazines that have quite a wide readership here in the US. But we know we've got listeners from all around the world, from over 35 countries at the moment, and I think it's important that they know what resources are available to

them. The benefit of these periodicals these magazines is that they often come out with some regularity. It's not like a book that's frozen in time.

Amy 02:08

No, it's active.

Jamie 02:09

Yeah, exactly.

Amy 02:10

Coming out in current time.

Jamie 02:11

Nothing at all against books. But when a book is published, it's basically the state of knowledge up until that point and then it stops.

Amy 02:18

I was about to say, what have books ever done to you?

Jamie 02:21

I love reading, but it's frozen, whereas the periodicals plays such an important role. Just specifically ABJ, American Bee Journal and Bee Culture, they're published on a monthly basis here in the US. Likewise, outside the US, the UK has its own popular journals, a few of them. One of them that comes to mind is Bee Craft. South African beekeepers have their own beekeeping journal, the Australians have their own beekeeping journal, and the Germans have theirs. And so these are important for beekeepers.

Amy 02:50

How would you recommend beekeepers go and look for them?

Jamie 02:53

So number one, and for this particular episode, we're going to have show notes on our website for this particular episode where they can go and find specifically information about finding American Bee Journal and Bee Culture. But what I would do if I were a beekeeper outside the US or in any country, for that matter, I would Google or do a search for "my country's name bee journal" and you might get a journal, you might get a newsletter, you might get a newspaper. There have been beekeeping newspapers in the past, for example, German beekeeping journal, Norwegian beekeeping journal, Italian beekeeping journal and you're likely to find a periodical that's relevant to where you are. And, Amy, I want to say one more thing, too. We're highlighting, again, on our podcast to American bee journals. But it's important to know that you can learn a lot about beekeeping by reading bee journals from other countries. So is this an American-centric podcast episode? No, I would argue that American Bee Journal and Bee Culture are important for beekeepers around the world. But likewise, I would

argue that journals from other countries are important for beekeepers here. Beekeepers here in the US could learn a lot by reading those journals and you don't always have to get a print copy. Some of these are available online.

Amy 04:11

That being said, it being available online versus subscribing and actually getting a hard copy. How do beekeepers actually get into that? How do you subscribe for this? And I think we mention a couple times later on that mentorship is huge. And so just being able to share that I heard that over and over again. So how do you subscribe and how do you move forward with getting these subscriptions? That's what I love about beekeeping, actually.

Jamie 04:32

So I would again search for my country's name and then bee journal or beekeeping periodical, and then I would go to that periodical's website and look for subscription information. I know that some of the ones here in the US offer kind of dual subscription, you get a print copy, but you also get online access. What you're going to probably find, at least with the two journals that we're going to highlight in today's episode, you're going to find that the readership is probably older than the standard readership. A lot of the beekeepers here in the US are older individuals, but beekeeping is booming at the moment. There are beekeepers coming out of everywhere and there's every age range and ethnic background and and job background and education background and gender background, and all people of all types from all over the place are getting into beekeeping. Yeah, of course. And the journals are going to have to respond to that. So right now, they're very print heavy, but trust me, we are heading in a direction where there will be information available online through these sources, blogs, etc. Heck, we're even doing a podcast, so I know that other journals are going to follow suit and do very similar things.

Amy 05:40

Yeah. Well, I'm excited to hear what Eugene and Jerry have to talk about today in our podcast.

Jamie 05:44

Yeah, absolutely. Guys, thanks for joining us on Two Bees in a Podcast and we're gonna get those interviews started shortly after the break. So, Amy, one of the things that beekeepers across the United States have as a resource is they have periodicals books. They have online access to all this type of information about honey bees and beekeeping. But one of the longest-running resources available is the American Bee Journal. American Bee Journal is one of a couple of national periodicals/magazines that we have about beekeeping. I've been reading it since I was a kid.

Amy 06:23

Did you know that we actually have a copy of the very first magazine?

Jamie 06:28

The very first American Bee Journal? Really?

Amy 06:30

We do. Someone donated it.

Jamie 06:31

Well, you've been holding out on me. I didn't know that.

Amy 06:34

It's been in the museum.

Jamie 06:35

Well, maybe I should visit the museum every once in a while. So the American Bee Journal, specifically, I've been fortunate to be a columnist. In fact, I wrote one of my first publications actually in 1996, I believe was published in the American Bee journal, because I was an American Beekeeping Federation 4HSA contest winner and they published my essay in the ABJ in 1996.

Amy 06:56

I didn't know you could write and read when you were one.

Jamie 06:58

I've been doing this since I was a kiddo. Since I was one, that's when I graduated high school. Anyway, and then I became a columnist some years ago and wrote a column series called A Field Guide to Beekeeping. Now, the question and answer guy for the American Bee Journal. I'm not sure how I got that job, but I do my best. Well, for this segment, we have the guy who's at the very top Eugene Makovec, who is the editor of the American Bee Journal. Eugene, welcome to Two Bees in a Podcast.

Guest 07:26

Morning.

Jamie 07:27

Hey, it's great to have you. Where are you joining us from?

Guest 07:31

I'm joining you from Foley, Missouri, which is where I live. It's on the eastern side of Missouri.

Jamie 07:37

Well, great. Well, let's just kind of start from the beginning. Can you give us, Eugene, a little bit about your beekeeping background? How did you find yourself as the editor of the American Bee Journal?

Guest 07:46

Sure. I started beekeeping in 1996. Well, I'm actually a third-generation beekeeper. I grew up with bees and never really had any interest in them when I was growing up. Unfortunately, I could have gotten a head start. So I've been at this, this would be my 25th year. I was pretty heavily involved in the Missouri

State Beekeepers, including editing the newsletter there and got to know Joe Graham, the old editor of ABJ and run into the data and set conferences and things like that. Joe would occasionally pick up articles of mine from the Missouri newsletter. So we knew each other at that point. And at some point when Joe retired, they ran an ad for an editor and I didn't see it. I was, like a lot of people, I get a couple of months behind in my reading and things like that. I sent you an email about something, got an out-of-office response to the effect that I'm no longer the editor. About a year later, I just happened to be chatting with Gabe Dadant at a conference and I had mentioned it to him and was talking about this and that. A couple of weeks later, here's some trainer who was editor for about 14-15 months, he stepped down and Gabe gave me a shout and said, "Are you interested in the job?" So I came up there and talked with them for a couple hours, and they offered me the job. So it was a pretty neat thing, and it was pretty, pretty sudden and it actually worked out well for me because the pretty company that I was working for it had been bought out about a year prior and things were kind of kind of going downhill there. So it's good timing for me. Let me ask then, specifically, so how long have you been at ABJ? So I took over at Thanksgiving time in 2018. So going on a year and a half.

Jamie 09:54

Okay. It's interesting when I think about journal editing, there are really kind of two parts to editing the American Bee Journal. First of all, you have to know the bee stuff, right? You've got to be able to vet that, you've got to know that. But secondly, you have to know how to write and edit other people's writing. So, what's your background in that half of the endeavor?

Guest 10:17

I have a journalism degree.

Jamie 10:18

Okay, that's helpful.

Guest 10:22

I had that kind of sitting on the shelf for a while, and that definitely comes in handy.

Jamie 10:28

So you were able to take it off the shelf and dust it off and it helped you out with ABJ.

Guest 10:32

And with my couple of decades of beekeeping experience that helps. And it's interesting that when I met Joe Graham the first time, I said, "You've been here a while, right?" And he said, "Yeah, I got out of journalism school, answered an ad in the paper, and I've been here ever since. Didn't know the first thing about bees or beekeeping at the time." And of course, he's been a beekeeper now for a few years. But I just thought that was interesting. Then, he went from there to Kirstin Traynor who was an entomologist. So she got the other end of it, and I'm somewhere in between. I certainly have the beekeeping experience with my work with MSBA. I attended a lot of conferences and listened to a lot of

people like Jamie Ellis and the experts talk about various things. So I have a pretty good knowledge base, I feel, in that regard.

Jamie 11:29

Yeah. So one of the things I appreciate as an author for the American Bee Journal, especially, now that I do the classroom series, is I appreciate that when I send you my manuscripts, you show me grammatical things that I can improve, which is good, because I spend all of my time editing manuscripts for other people here at the University of Florida. So it's nice to have someone who's able to teach me a thing or two about correct English usage. So I think you do a good job, at least with the articles that I provide you. So thank you so much for that.

Guest 12:01

Yeah, I think that's important, too. That was something that I didn't get when I would have things published in magazines. I didn't really -- I'd send something, and the next time I saw it was in print. It's nice to kind of get that feedback. And I get a lot of people thanking me for that.

Jamie 12:20

Sure. So Eugene, that's a good overview of you and your involvement. But you've been mentioning a few times American Bee Journal, you've been mentioning the name Dadant, Gabe Dadant, Dadant, Dadant, etc. So, what is American Bee Journal's linked to Dadant? What is the history of the journal?

Guest 12:38

The journal was started in 1861. We're the old guys. Bee Culture didn't come along till about five years later.

Jamie 12:49

They're spring chickens.

Guest 12:52

But Samuel Wagner was the first editor. And he was hobnobbing with Langstroth and some of these other guys. And actually, I wrote for them in the early days too, the guy who later started Bee Culture. But Wagner was the first editor, and after he stepped down, I'm not sure if he stepped down or if he died, but Langstroth actually was assistant editor along with Wagner's son for a time before they moved down from there. At some point, I think it was about, oh, the late 1860s when Dadant took over publishing the Bee Journal, and they've published it ever since. They also took over Langstroth's Hive and the Honey Bee, and they still publish that. The latest edition was 2015, gets revised about every 15 to 20 years, give or take. So it's been in that Dadant family ever since. And the Dadant family obviously runs Dadant & Sons. I'm working for sixth and seventh generation data. That's a great thing. I mean, I really feel like it's a stable company to work for. They're training the next generation.

Jamie 14:19

Yeah, I think that's one of the neat things about the American Bee Journal, the Hive and the Honey Bee that you mentioned, and just Dadant in general because of the link to the history of beekeeping here in the United States, but also around the world. I know that when I write articles for the American Bee Journal, I get people from outside the US asking me questions about things that are said so I know it's widely read.

Amy 14:41

Yeah, I mean, you're talking about the history, and Jamie, you have people from around the world kind of reading some of the stuff on there. We have it online. I was just wondering, I guess, who is reading these magazines? I mean, we have YouTube. We've got YouTube, I mean, so how have you guys been able to just through history and through time, been able to work with different audiences and who's reading this?

Guest 15:07

Yeah. YouTube can be a great source for this and a lot of other things. But it's just a YouTube and Facebook and some of these other sources, it's kind of hard to know what you're getting, especially early on. You and I can read stuff on Facebook and whatnot and kind of pick through and know what makes sense and what does not. But for a lot of people, that's not the case. And I think that the publications like ABJ and Bee Culture and others, they're kind of there to help you separate the wheat from the chaff when you go through some of that information. We don't publish things unless they make some kind of sense. Now, obviously, different people have different opinions on a lot of things. But if somebody sends me something that is just, I read it, and it just sounds like nonsense, it doesn't make the journal. Or if it does, it's clear that it's an opinion that if I'm not sure about something, there are people that I know that I can run it by and get opinions too.

Amy 16:24

Yeah, so the title has the name journal in it, right? Are you ultimately the person who's reading this and vetting what is right and what's wrong? Or how does that process work? Are these articles -- how does it work?

Guest 16:37

Yeah, depending on what it is, I typically am the one who decides, but again, like I said, if there's something that I'm unclear on, if there's something that I question, I go back and say, "Okay, can you show me support for this, what you're saying, because this is something that's new to me, and I'm not sure it makes sense. Please back this up with some sources to say that."

Jamie 17:02

So Eugene, one of the things that I appreciate about the journal is as an extension worker who has an employment extension, I find it very difficult sometimes to reach commercial beekeepers. They won't come to meetings, they won't read documents and things like that. And so I often wonder, what's a good way to reach them? But if I put something in the ABJ, someone, some commercial beekeeper is going to have read it. In fact, when I bumped into commercial beekeepers here in the state, Florida and

elsewhere, they'll mention to me things I said in the American Bee Journal. And one of the things I think that's important is it is a resource for all beekeepers. There are kind of hobbyist-centric articles, there are sideline-centric articles, but there are a lot of things that commercial beekeepers rely heavily on in the pages of that journal. They read it and they do it. The stuff that they see is often published there first and then they will change management practices related to seeing that information in the journal.

Guest 18:02

Yeah, we try and appeal to a broad spectrum. The statement has been made that most beekeepers are hobbyists but most bees are owned by commercial people. So if we target only commercial beekeepers, the audience is going to be fairly small. But we also have to have that information that they need because like I said, they are reading these magazines for information on how to be better beekeepers. And they're reading for the science, also. Amy, you mentioned the word journal being in our title. I've had people ask me that, say, "This has the word journal in the title. That means it's a scientific publication, and these should be peer-reviewed articles in here." And that's not really the case. Though, yes, journal can sometimes mean it's a scientific journal, but it's also another name for magazine. I mean, I don't think Ladies Home Journal, for example, was a peer-reviewed publication. It's just one of those, it's just part of the name. And it's been there all this time, and I'm not going to be the one to change it. But we do have some scientific things in there. Certainly, we don't typically publish peer-reviewed articles because not a lot of beekeepers want to slog through the scientific, the deep science like that, but they also understand that it's important to them and that's why we have people like Scott McArt, Ali McAfee that have regular columns, going through some of the latest scientists and, basically, distilling it down saying, this is what it means and this is what it's going to look like in the future. There's some cutting-edge research going on. And people say, "Oh my goodness, we're gonna be able to just put mushrooms in our hives now and kill Varroa."

Amy 19:58

Wait, that doesn't work?

Guest 20:00

I have to explain," Hey, there's something there but see us in a couple years."

Jamie 20:06

Yeah, next time. Sure. Well, let me make a statement, then I'm gonna ask you a question. When I first became a scientist and started dabbling in research, almost two decades ago now, American Bee Journal did publish refereed manuscripts at the end of the journal. I remember there was like a research section and a lot of the articles that were going there were very applied, very beekeeper friendly. It's one of the few things that I really miss about the journal. I enjoyed having those in there in ABJ as a venue for publishing. But it's neat still, though, that your columnists will read refereed manuscripts and distill that information to beekeepers. I mean, that's extension at work. So let me ask you a question. So when a reader receives an American Bee Journal, and they open its covers, what types of things are found in the ABJ's pages? Walk us through a standard journal from beginning to

end. What regular columns do you have? How do you invite certain topics to fill in your more open articles? What's in the pages of the American Bee Journal?

Guest 21:16

Okay, well, first, let me just address what you said about the referee articles. Because I remember seeing those, too, back when I started. I asked Joe Graham about this one. When I took this job, I spent a week working with Joe. He's kind of popped out of retirement to help do an issue, and I came at the end of that at that time, and I mentioned that to him. And he said, "Yeah, we had a peer-reviewed section for a while." And his comment was nobody read it. Obviously, you read it, and some people did. But I think there wasn't a big audience for that among the general readership. So the science is important, but we do more of a distilled down version. The typical magazine, when it comes out, you open it up and you find, beyond just the letters to the editor and stuff, we have the classroom where Jerry Hayes did that for years and years, and Amy, just for your information, it took me a little finagling to talk Jamie into taking this over. He was kind of, "Well, let me think."

Jamie 22:37

It's hard to take on additional responsibility. I loved writing the Field Guide for Beekeeping for ABJ. I still would love to restart that. But it just kept me up until two and three in the morning putting those articles together, so it was just tough. But the classroom's easier because I answer questions. The classroom is a little bit easier because, essentially, for you listeners out there, the classroom is just a question and answer. You email me questions, and I'll do my best to answer them. That's the strategy there.

Guest 23:05

Yeah, but you're doing a great job. It's been well-received. And we have things like the columns I mentioned, Ali and Scott, with their scientific columns. Randy Oliver's a big draw and has been for a few years now. He's kind of an on-the-ground researcher. He's a commercial beekeeper, and he does a lot of research on an applied science thing. It's not peer-reviewed, and he's open and we're open about that, but it's something that a lot of people flip that magazine open, and that's the first thing they read, because they like that he's one of us. He's not just in a lab somewhere. I get a lot of things sent to me just out of the blue and that was one of the things that surprised me just how much comes across my desk. And some of it's great, some of it not so much. We really like to do the how-to stuff, how to build this, how to how to design, put this attachment on my hive to keep hive beetles out, and various things like that, and people find that kind of thing interesting and that was one of the things Joe told me early on. People just want to be better beekeepers and they want to know what they can do to improve their chances and produce more honey and things like that. So we have a lot of those types of articles.

Jamie 24:50

Management-related. But don't you guys also, if I'm not mistaken, you have honey market articles, you have your editorial, you guys also make announcements on behalf of the bee clubs around the country, who's speaking where, what events are coming up, things like that as well?

Guest 25:08

Yeah, we have news and events. That's a popular thing. And we have clubs all over sending us their events and March 21st, we've got such and such conference and we put that in. We have an online calendar where we put those things also.

Amy 25:24

Yeah, so I'm just wondering how often these magazines come out. I should know that but I don't.

Guest 25:30

Yeah, so it's a monthly. There was a time when ABJ was a weekly magazine. One of our regular columnists, Wyatt Mangum writes a lot about history of beekeeping, historical beekeeping equipment, and various things. And he had an article a while back about, I think he called it, "When ABJ was Weekly," and he's talking about how it was a completely different magazine 100 years ago. It's funny how things have changed.

Jamie 26:02

Yeah. So basically, I think it's fair to say, if it is a topic related to beekeeping or apiculture, it will show up at some point in the journal. Prices, questions, research, new gadgets, all of those kinds of things show up in its pages.

Guest 26:19

Yeah, and we do occasionally talk about other bees and other pollinators and things. One of our columnists, Rusty Burlew, who is really big on under the native, the native insects and native pollinators. And then she actually works for a website called iNaturalist, which is something that I've used in the past. I go around the yard and take photos of various things. I look for honey bees, and I find all these other things and I don't know what the heck they are. And I go on this iNaturalist and they identify. They have volunteers who will identify them for you. And Rusty is one of these people that does that. And she's got a broad knowledge on honey bees and every other type of bee or wasp imaginable, and how they differ. And I think that's interesting to beekeepers on a now and then basis.

Jamie 27:16

Let me ask a conclusion-type question. So what does the future of the American Bee Journal look like? How's it going to look 20, 30, 40 years from now? What role do you think it's going to play in beekeeping?

Guest 27:32

I would like to think that we're still going to be a print magazine at that point, but you never know. Things are moving more and more to digital. I still like to spread out a newspaper in front of me, and read a hard copy of something. But beekeeping, of course, is changing. I would also like to think that we won't be talking about Varroa mite on a monthly basis.

Jamie 27:53

That's be nice.

Guest 27:55

That's wishful thinking. But we're always going to have those challenges and we're always going to have the need for good resources to help to address those challenges. I think that we're going to have more and more digital resources, probably, as well. And hopefully, we'll be a part of that.

Jamie 28:19

Yeah, I mean, as I've shared with you, I really believe that American Bee Journal has an important role in helping beekeepers. Beekeepers read it, they change their management based on what they read in the pages, and honestly, that's, to me, one of the biggest rewards that I can see from subscribing to it. You learn stuff that makes you a better beekeeper, you learn tricks of the trade, and it connects you to the greater world of beekeeping and lets you know what's going on out there. And so, Eugene, I really appreciate your time joining us. You've been a great guest here on Two Bees in a Podcast.

Guest 28:53

Thanks for having me.

Jamie 28:54

Absolutely. So ladies and gentlemen, that's been Eugene Makovec. He is the editor of the American Bee Journal. Look it up online, subscribe to it, you will not be sorry.

Honey Bee 29:07

Have questions or comments? Don't forget to like and follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter @UFhoneybeelab.

Jamie 29:18

So Amy, I am kind of superduper excited.

Amy 29:21

Super duper excited?

Jamie 29:22

Yeah. Super duper excited for a couple reasons. Reason number one, in this particular segment, we are continuing our discussion on some of the national periodicals that are shaping beekeeping here in the US and that one being Bee Culture. That's the first reason I'm excited to talk about Bee Culture. But I'm even more excited because the editor of Bee Culture, Jerry Hayes, is a friend of mine, a personal friend of mine who I've known for, gosh, I don't know, 15, almost 18 or so years. He and I worked together here in Florida when he was here as the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Apiary Inspection Head. And then, when he went on and worked in industry, and I even know him today, so I'm really, really excited to have him on.

Amy 30:03

Sounds like you guys are besties.

Jamie 30:04

Yeah. BFFs.

Amy 30:06

Do you guys have like friendship bracelets?

Jamie 30:08

Yeah, you see it here?

Guest 2 30:11

\$100 a month payment to Jamie really works.

Jamie 30:14

That's right. So just to give the listeners some background, we're joined today by Jerry Hayes, who is the editor of Bee Culture. That is why he's here on our Two Bees in a Podcast. I'm going to try hard to keep all of my questions related to Bee Culture, even though there's so much I want to talk to Jerry about because I know him so well. Hey, Jerry, how are you doing?

Guest 2 30:34

Good. No, and thank you for this. This is exciting to be able to do this with you and see Amy there and think about our history together. This is great.

Jamie 30:44

Yeah. So Jerry, just as a quick caveat, we're going to have you on future episodes of Two Bees in a Podcast talking about all kinds of stuff that you know and have done for the beekeeping industry. But today, I'm going to do my best to keep it to just an interview about Bee Culture. So before we get into Bee Culture, specifically, can you briefly tell me your journey into beekeeping? And what led you to be the editor of Bee Culture?

Guest 2 31:08

Oh, I don't know that I can do this quickly. Let me, okay, here we go. I started out in life as a high school teacher, and I hated it. So went into another business, and had a guy working with me who was a beekeeper, a beekeeper from Wisconsin. And I thought, well, this is very cool, everybody knows about honey bees, but nobody actually knows a beekeeper because this was many years ago.

Jamie 31:33

Before beekeeping was cool, right, Jerry?

Guest 2 31:35

Before beekeeping was cool and to have somebody say that he was a beekeeper was just a little bit weird.

Jamie 31:40

In a place called Wisconsin.

Guest 2 31:45

And he had a cheese thing on his head. The whole thing. But, it was interesting. And so I kind of picked his brain and ask all the questions that somebody might ask and became more interested and fascinated. And then I started reading things, and the short story is I turned into the consummate backyard beekeeper. I did all the things backyard beekeepers do. I made things, I squished queens, I did all the things that you do. And so I thought at one point, this is pretty cool, and my passion had grown. Could I actually take care of a family, provide for family doing this? I had a very patient wife and went back to school to Ohio State University. It had an apiculture program back there under Dr. Jim Tew, and that probably was one of the top three or four things I've ever done in my life. It was great. Jim was great. Motivated me even more and it was yeah, it was fantastic. And so then I went to USDA Bee Breeding and Stock Lab in Baton Rouge for a little while and then up the river to Dadant Science for quite a few years where I started writing The Classroom and wrote the book The Classroom, and then had the opportunity to go to Florida and fill the role of chief of the Apiary Inspection section after Mr. Cutts. And then from there I went to... Shhh.

Jamie 33:33

I won't tell anyone, Jerry.

Guest 2 33:34

Santo. Yeah, I was a honey bee --

Jamie 33:40

You know, this is a podcast for beekeepers.

Guest 2 33:43

But we can cut that part out. So no, but I was a honey bee health lead and so they had a technology at the time using RNAi, which we can talk about or not. It was a big company with a lot of money and some people beat me up but some people thought I was good for me to be there as an ambassador for the industry. And so went from there and now, it's kind of my swan song here I think is had the opportunity to become editor of, golly, Bee Culture magazine, which has unbelievable history associated with it, and be able to learn and work with beekeepers in a different way. So this is pretty exciting.

Jamie 34:34

So Jerry, let's talk specifically about that history of Bee Culture. Just as a quick aside, I've been keeping bees since I was 12 and my mentor liked Bee Culture. That's the magazine he preferred. So he talked

me into subscribing to it. So it carried me through all of my early beekeeping years as I read the pages of this journal, so it's funny to know that Bee Culture even predates me. So let's talk a little bit about the history. What do you know about the history of Bee Culture?

Guest 2 35:02

There's a lot of history to Bee Culture and it all starts with A.I. Root in Medina, Ohio, who kind of accidentally fell in the beekeeping too. He was a jeweler in Medina and had a swarm blamed on his building, he captured the swarm, tried to put it in a hive, it flew away. Anyway, he became more fascinated as well with honey bees, and got into him became a beekeeper. And he was an amazing entrepreneur. Also, he started making beekeeping equipment because this was the late 1800s and none of this had solidified as yet. And then with that engagement, he started writing questions and answers, answering people and decided to kind of formulate that into something more specific and started the magazine Bee Culture magazine. And it's been in the family ever since Kim Flottum. I can never replace Kim Flottum. I took the place of Kim Flottum who was here for 34 years. And then there was Dimuth before him and just all sorts of people that have been connected to the beekeeping industry for over 100 years.

Jamie 36:31

Well, Jerry, do you happen to know how many volumes and issues the Bee Culture had been published?

Guest 2 36:35

I have no earthly idea.

Jamie 36:37

So what year did it start? Was it in the 1860s?

Guest 2 36:40

Yeah. And so it's kind of interesting that you mentioned that because we have across the road is the big candle factory, which used to be the beekeeping supply where they cut woodenware. Anyway, it's candles now, but up on the third floor, which is kind of quiet and like the Twilight Zone up there, they have boxes and boxes and boxes of past issues of Bee Culture. For instance, I was up there looking around and you get all the bird droppings off things and everything else. You'll have a whole box, a whole box of 1933 or a whole box of 1945. Well, it's incredible that we have, to me, this history. And we need to preserve that somewhere.

Jamie 37:35

I completely agree. I know a brand new beekeeping museum in Florida.

Amy 37:40

So I'm wondering who's reading Bee Culture?

Jamie 37:44

Oh, my goodness. So, "Hey, Jerry," apparently sounds like, "Hey, Siri."

Amy 37:51

My phone just went off.

Jamie 37:52

It's gonna go off again if you say it out loud.

Amy 37:53

They are listening, and they're watching.

Jamie 37:55

So, anyway, Jerry, I'll see if I can do what Amy couldn't.

Amy 37:57

Wait. Let me try one more time.

Jamie 37:59

Who reads Bee Culture?

Guest 2 38:03

Kim Flottum had done this several times about every five or six years, do a survey of who is reading, which is a great thing. And so our readers are primarily 55 years and older. They have retired, or getting close to retirement, have moved to the country, are probably my age, read the Mother Earth News in 1975 and wanted to save the world back then and now beekeeping allows them to try to do that. So it's primarily hobby, backyard, some commercial beekeepers who there again have this new passion for honey bees in the environment. And Bee Culture fills that interest and need for them.

Jamie 38:57

But Bee Culture is read around the world, right? I mean, how many countries do you ship Bee Culture to? I'm curious.

Guest 2 39:02

About 40.

Jamie 39:03

Wow.

Amy 39:04

Wow. I'm just wondering as far as how you did your evaluation, because that's kind of my specialty, how do you give out the surveys?

Guest 2 39:12

Oh, yeah. So of course, we have the list of subscribers with their email addresses, or their postal addresses, and we just send them all out. We have about 15,000 subscribers.

Jamie 39:28

Wow.

Guest 2 39:28

And so the data is actually pretty decent. Certainly, not all 15,000 respond, but we have enough that we're pretty confident that's what it is.

Amy 39:38

That's amazing.

Jamie 39:39

So someone grabs a copy or an issue of Bee Culture, they open its pages and what do they find? What types of columns are in there? What types of information are published on its pages?

Guest 2 39:52

Yeah, let me just step back here because Kim did an outstanding job for 34 years, but this is Jerry, and I have some other needs, wants, and desires for this. So what we're going to be doing, of course, is addressing new beekeepers' needs, different hive styles, we have Dr. J. Evans, who writes a column, Dr. Clarence Collison writes a column, I have Joe Traynor who's in the almond industry out west writing a new column. I was just putting together the May issue, and we have Dr. Becky Masterman from University of Minnesota is going to be writing columns. And this is all, basically, educational outreach. My goal and desire is for beekeepers to be successful. And there are too many places to go on the web that are a little shaky. And so I want people to have trust and confidence in Bee Culture, that the information and the authors there will help them be successful.

Jamie 41:07

So do you have like question and answer sections? Do you have biology topics? Management topics? I remember when I was a kid, my mentor really preferred the honey market section. He would often price his honey based on what he was seeing in that honey market. So tell us a little bit about the content of the columns.

Guest 2 41:27

Yeah, in fact, like I said, I was putting together the May issue already. And so we have, of course, the contents, which is features, then we have mail, people right in articles.

Jamie 41:42

So letters to the editor, essentially.

Guest 2 41:44

Write letters to the editor. And then I have the editors page. Kim was much better than I am about writing about the meeting he went to or what have you. And so as you know, I'm kind of mixing this up, I did an interview with you and I've done some other interviews. This one's going to be more like my question and answer that used to be in The Classroom. Then, we have the honey report, what's going on, what's selling? And then next month, which is kind of telling readers, what do I need to do in May? Because all these new beekeepers. Then we have the formal class question answer section called Bee Talk, which this month, for May, have Bob Sears from Missouri, Kim Scram from Massachusetts, and I forget who the other person was, oh, Mary Reed from Texas, going to answer a couple of questions. And then we have new products that we want to highlight. And then a new one that I wanted to start is, and I don't know what the title is going to be, but it's AIA is helping me out with this. And so what we're going to do is highlight each state's apiary inspector, a little bit of what they do in their state and what have you. So that's going to be a series as well. And then we have J. Evans in his column. And then I have John Miller, commercial beekeeper from out west commenting on almond pollination. Then another new series I'm starting is focused on Canada and research out of Canada. And then, for instance, we have the next one is 10 rules of communicating pesticide rules. And then I have Clarence Collison, Becky Masterman, from University of Minnesota, then I have Tina Sebastian, who's done a series on horizontal beekeeping. Then we have Jim Tew's column that's been in there forever. Everybody loves Jim. And then we have Eric Osterlund from Norway talking about a million dollars that Norway got for Varroa control. Connie Crockwell, who's going to do blooming and spring. Ann Harmon's column, then I have another one on just kind of a one-pager on what is propolis? Why might it have some value to not only bees, but beekeepers. And so that's kind of what I'm shooting for. But a little bit different. Of course, every month, I don't want to be boring.

Jamie 44:30

I mean, that's pretty incredible. That's a huge diversity of topics in any month, that's going to change. And as you said, you're already in over 40 countries. So clearly, there's stuff in the pages of Bee Culture that readers want to see, right? I mean, when I read it as a kid, and when I hear my colleagues reading it now, they're learning things about keeping bees. It's clearly appealing to people around the world. So what role then, in general, do you believe that Bee Culture plays in beekeeping today, but as well as beekeeping in the next 20, 50 to 100 years?

Guest 2 45:04

Great questions. I think there again, it's educational outreach, providing accurate information, and perhaps, even causing people to pause and think about the industry, about what they're doing, about how it's connected to the environment. Because this isn't a static hobby or profession or anything else. And then in the future, certainly would like to have Bee Culture be the premier beekeeping magazine that people say, "Oh, did you see that in Bee Culture?" Not that I don't love American Bee Journal or Eugene. But my goal here is to be the best. That's my goal.

Jamie 45:57

Well, good, Amy. I'm glad you said that.

Amy 45:57

That's our goal too. Jerry, so I was just wondering, as far as the content that's being released, who vets that information? Is that just you? Do you have a group of people going through and reading drafts? And you're laughing right now at me. Why are you laughing? Do you make everything up? Is everything a lie?

Jamie 46:18

Are you the gatekeeper, Jerry?

Guest 2 46:21

Yeah, and the reason I smiled is because Amy asked me a question that made me pause because we all talk on the six o'clock news and everything else about, teams, and have you vetted this with this person, and I have to admit, I haven't done any of that.

Amy 46:46

That's fair. I'm glad you're being honest.

Jamie 46:48

You're the omniscient editor.

Guest 2 46:50

Well, I don't know about that.

Jamie 46:54

Omnipresent. You're everywhere, all knowing and the ultimate authority,

Guest 2 46:58

Just like Santa Claus.

Jamie 47:02

That's not who I was thinking.

Guest 2 47:07

But no. To get back to this, this has been fun for me because these are things that I think are valuable and important. And then I get these other people to express their ideas down that path. For me, right now, hopefully, it's fun. And hopefully, it's readable and valuable to those reading.

Jamie 47:27

Yeah, I mean, I don't doubt for a second that it is. I told Eugene, the editor of American Bee Journal when we were interviewing him, I run into commercial beekeepers quite a bit, hobbyists, sideliners, etc.

But they will often know me from the pages of the journal. And when I publish in ABJ or in the past, when I published in Bee Culture, I'd have colleagues or beekeepers, really from around the world, contact me and say, "Hey, I saw you publish this article and I have this question." So these are important resources for beekeepers, not just in the States, but absolutely everywhere. And so, you, as the editor of Bee Culture, you're carrying on a tradition. Bee Culture has a very storied, respected tradition, but it's also beyond just tradition management, it's important to have Bee Culture now to help beekeepers address the issues that they are having today. And it's nice to see that you also have a strategy for developing that further in the future. So let's talk a little bit more about the future. I mean, right now you're a print magazine and a lot of people are going online and blogs and Twitter and Facebook and Instagram and online periodicals. What do you plan to do? You mentioned your readership is 55 and older, but that won't always be the case. A lot of these new beekeepers are --

Amy 48:43

Yeah. They'll be 75 and older.

Jamie 48:44

That's right. A lot of these new beekeepers are young. How do you get Bee Culture into their hands? How do you use technology? What's your plan for moving in that direction?

Guest 2 48:53

Yeah, no and that's exactly where we're going because we have hard copies because some people just like hard copies, your older ones. But as we all die, that's gonna morph. So we have a digital edition that we're working on and I don't know if you're familiar with Catch the Buzz. That's our daily digital thing that goes out to about 40,000 people. So we're doing that and I get, there again, I sound like a Hitler or something here, I get to pick out those articles and format those and think the pictures out and what have you for those those daily releases. But yes, you're right, the digital component of this has to grow, should grow. And in concert with that, one of the things I wanted to do with the magazine was make the articles smaller, shorter. The days when everything was five and six pages and no pictures, nobody cares. So my goal is --

Amy 50:04

I care, Jerry, I care.

Guest 2 50:07

Well, do you have a subscription, Amy?

Amy 50:10

I'll get one soon.

Jamie 50:12

Well, Jerry, I like that. As an author, that's actually appealing to me because I've always felt compelled to write these long articles, to be thorough, but I liked the idea of writing two or three or four page articles and filling them with pictures. That saves the writing.

Guest 2 50:25

Oh, yeah, no. Pictures, yeah. No, you're right, because we're all visual creatures. I've envisioned people sitting down and thumbing through a Bee Culture. And if it's all just print, nobody's going to do that in 2020. So you gotta have some pictures, big pictures, gets their attention for three seconds, and maybe then get them to read the article and the headline has to be a little bit different. I hate to say this, but every magazine and every article is a product, and how do you make that product appealing to the customer so that they'll take advantage of the product?

Jamie 51:01

Yeah. Well, Jerry, let me ask you one last question then. So how do our listeners find and subscribe to Bee Culture?

Guest 2 51:07

Well, you can go to www.BeeCulture.com. And that's our website. And we'll have information about subscriptions. Do you want the digital, do you want the hardcopy? Do you want to sign up for Catch the Buzz? And can I be capitalistic here for a second?

Jamie 51:29

Sure thing.

Guest 2 51:30

All right, so generally --

Jamie 51:31

No socialists here.

Guest 2 51:33

Generally, a year subscription to Bee Culture is like 25 bucks. For those listening into this podcast, I'll cut that in half to \$12.50.

Jamie 51:43

Whoa! If you listen to Two Bees in a Podcast, you could subscribe to Bee Culture for \$12.50.

Amy 51:47

Wait, what if you're a host? Do I get to pay a quarter of the price?

Guest 2 51:52

Take it up with Jamie.

Jamie 51:55

Well, Jerry, I really appreciate you joining us today on Two Bees in a Podcast. Listening to what you talk about with Bee Culture and the value it is to beekeepers is really great. I just thank you from the bottom of my heart for joining us.

Guest 2 52:05

Oh, golly, no, I'm thanking you for this opportunity. There again, I have to think how much fun has it been? What have we been able to do and experience because of honey bees?

Jamie 52:17

I know. It's not even over, Jerry. It's not even over.

Guest 2 52:20

Nobody gets to do that. We travel the world because of honey bees and honey bees impacts our lives and our environment. I just get goosebumps every day.

Jamie 52:30

Heck, Jerry, we're doing a podcast on honey bees, which is not something I thought I'd say when I was 10 or 15. But nevertheless, Jerry, thank you for joining us. Jerry Hayes is the editor of Bee Culture. Thanks again, Jerry.

Guest 2 52:42

Thank you. Appreciate it.

Stump The Chump 52:51

It's everybody's favorite game show, Stump The Chump.

Amy 52:59

All right. It's about that time. Question and answer time. Here we are. Jamie, I don't know about you but I'm sitting in my closet right now because it's coronavirus time and we just have to work from home. So we're just going to continue.

Jamie 53:12

So just to let people know that we're in our respective closets, not because we're hiding from the virus.

Amy 53:17

That's right. It's good to clarify.

Jamie 53:19

We're in our respective closets because that's the quietest, best place in the house to record. In Amy's case, I guess you tried some other rooms and it was echoey. In my case, I have four children and a

wife who are somewhere around the house. So if I hide out in my closet, clothes will muffle the sound a bit and hopefully keep the sound quality high and the background noise low in addition to keeping coronavirus outside of our house.

Amy 53:42

Yes, absolutely. Okay, so we have a couple of questions from the audience and our listeners. And the first question we have is about Africanized honey bees. So this person, Steven on Twitter, asked, they want to know more about African honey bees. They're wondering, why doesn't the African honey bee gene pool get watered down as they mate with more varieties in the US? It seems like maybe their genetics must be pretty dominant.

Jamie 54:11

Yeah, so there's a lot of information to know here and I'm gonna just try to answer it as quickly as I can. But the short answer is -- let me start a little bit from beginning. We work with *Apis mellifera*, that's the Western honey bee. Its natural distribution is Europe, the Middle East and Africa. So starting with that background, African bees are simply African subspecies of the same honey bees that we keep. So we tend to call our bees European honey bees, that just simply means that they came from Europe hundreds of years ago. They're more appropriately called European-derived honey bees. They're no longer European, they haven't been there for hundreds of years. The same is true for African bees. We keep African-derived honey bees, but because the African subspecies of honey bees are the same species as the European subspecies of honey bees, they can completely hybridize. So then, specifically to your question, how are African bees so successful? Why don't they have traits that get watered down? Well, there's a lot of things that contribute to the perpetuation of the African bee phenotype expression of the traits in this particular bee. Just going down a quick list, their genes are dominant. For example, defensiveness. When you cross a general European honey bee with with a more defensive African honey bee, you tend to get a more defensive hybrid, not a gentle hybrid. Simple things such as their offspring develop faster. Our typical worker bees will develop in 21 days, African worker bees will develop in about 20 days. The same is true for queens. Their queens will develop faster than ours. So imagine a situation where you've got a queen in your colony, and it's mated with 10 European drones and one African drone, and they go queenless. Statistically, the odds are that if they go to make a queen, that the queens from the African lineage will develop faster than the queens from the European lineage so they'll emerge first. So it's a lot of little things like this that compound that ultimately skew the pendulum in favor of African bees to the exclusion of European bees. So as a result, you tend to get this perpetuation of the African bee in the environment. They also swarm a lot more so they produce a mess load more colonies, they produce more drones per colony proportionately than our colonies do. So just these little factors are just a few of the things that they do that collectively push things in the direction of the perpetuation of this particular subspecies. You would think, superficially, that they should be watered down quickly. But the opposite is actually true. They just are a strong bee. Where they can survive, they quickly become the dominant subspecies of honey bee present, or the dominant derived honey bee from that particular subspecies.

Amy 56:58

It's like the survival of the fittest.

Jamie 56:59

They're an amazing bee. They really, truly are.

Amy 57:02

Awesome. Okay, so for our next question, is checking a hive once a week or even more than that, is that bad for the colony? How often should we be going through it? And how often is too often?

Jamie 57:14

I tell people who ask me that question, this is usually a very beginner beekeeper question about working with bees too much, and I always tell people, if you're a brand new beekeeper that first year, don't worry about working your bees too much. Going into your colonies will teach you a lot, you'll get to experience a lot with the bees, you'll enjoy the work, you'll learn a lot about them. By the time you're rockin and rollin' that second season, generally speaking, you go into your colonies once every one to two weeks during production season. That's usually spring and early summer when they're making honey. Usually, about every two to three weeks in summer and maybe every three to four weeks in fall. And then you usually only go about once a month in winter. And that's more kind of standard practices. Amy, we actually have a document that I wrote for the American Bee Journal some years ago that talks about the time requirements of working honey bees. And we can make sure and share a link to that document in the notes section so that people who are interested in, how much time does it take to work colonies and how much time should I invest in working colonies, they can have those answers in that document that I developed some years ago.

Amy 58:16

Awesome. And we'll share that in the additional notes and resources. So that leads me, I guess, to the last question of the Q&A segment. And that is, I mean, if you aren't checking your bees right now, in Florida, as we record, there are a lot of swarms that are happening. So can you talk about what to do if a swarm happens? I mean, some people don't actually want to either split or to catch swarms. But what do you do when you you start seeing all these swarms, and you'd only really plan on having one or two colonies?

Jamie 58:44

Yeah. So just for point of reference for our listeners, we are recording this kind of in late March 2020 so that's the beginning of our swarm season in Florida. But it doesn't really matter when your respective swarm season started, you're going to have a swarm season. So, if you're a beekeeper and you don't want more colonies, then you've got to practice swarm control. You really need to stay on top of that. In fact, in my opinion, one of the pillars of bee management is effective swarm control. You want your bees to stay put, so that you can maximize the number of bees that you have in that colony to do the work that they need to do. Incidentally, bees most want to swarm when you least want them to. They prefer to swarm during honey production season, which is when you need the most to be home. So we've got another good document on swarm management techniques we can put in the show notes.

But one of the things I want to say is what happens if you're out there, and you're not a beekeeper and a swarm shows up on your property? A colony establishes on a tree trunk or a wall of the house etc., what should you do? Well, there's a couple of options for you. You can contact a beekeeper who, hopefully, will have some experience providing swarm or colony removal services for you. And incidentally, given that in some states swarm removal or colony removal is considered pest control, you need to make sure that if that's the case, in your state, the beekeepers are trained and carry all the appropriate licenses or insurance etc, because they might be considered, quote, practicing pest control. So you can contact beekeepers, they'll come and often try to remove those colonies live. They want to get those bees and rehabilitate them, put them in their colonies or hives and manage them further. The second option is you can contact a pest control operator. So if bees show up in your wall or chimney or tree, etc, you contact a pest control operator, and they're going to come out and eradicate the bees. And so usually you have those two options, you have beekeepers, who will provide the removal services, and pest control operators who will provide the eradication services. In both cases, you want to make sure that the individuals involved are adequately trained and insured and all that stuff. And incidentally, Amy, as you know, we've got quite a few documents on this topic, and we can put in the show notes as well. So from the beekeeper's perspective, you'll want to control swarming. From the homeowner and business owner, whoever's perspective, if you've got swarms or colonies moving in, you need to have those dealt with as well. So it's important to know what to do kind of on both ends of this particular spectrum.

Amy 1:01:10

Yeah, absolutely. And I feel like that's my number one call or email or request inquiry from people is just that they have a swarm and it's come in and they don't know what to do about it.

Jamie 1:01:20

If you're not a beekeeper, it's freaky, right? You have this colony move into your property, you're not sure what to do. But responsibly, you should either contact a beekeeper, which of course, would be our recommendation, the beekeeper's trained, they can remove it safely. Or contact a pest control operator.

Amy 1:01:35

Awesome. Well, thank you. With the listeners out there, thanks for your patience. The sound quality isn't going to be exactly like what it's been like in the studio, but we're trying our best to put out content and continue putting out content.

Jamie 1:01:49

Keep those questions coming. Yeah, sure.

Amy 1:01:56

We'd like to give an extra special thank you to the following: to our editors, Shelby Hal and Bailey Carol, and to our audio engineer, James Weaver. Without their hard work, Two Bees in a Podcast would not be possible. So thank you.



Jamie 1:02:11

For more information and additional resources for today's episode, don't forget to visit the UF/IFAS Honey Bee Research Extension Laboratory's website ufhoneybee.com. Do you have questions you want answered on air? If so, email them to honeybee@ifas.ufl.edu or message us on Twitter, Instagram or Facebook @UFhoneybeelab. While there don't forget to follow us. Thank you for listening to Two Bees in a Podcast!