



Mini camp

The Osceola High School girls volleyball team, along with Head Coach Holly Huppert and Asst. Varsity Coach Amy Graf, ran an annual mini camp for girls from the Osceola Intermediate and Middle Schools. With the help of the varsity players mentoring each of the girls, the younger players received solid instruction while having fun playing with the more seasoned players.



Donation

Sarah Carlson of Dresser recently cut her hair and donated it to Pantene Beautiful Lengths, a cancer organization committed to offering free wigs to cancer patients. Carlson had been growing her hair for four years in order to donate it in her aunt's memory, Cheryl Schmitz of New Richmond, who lost her battle with cancer. *Submitted photo*



National Night Out

Osceola Police Officer Jeff Wolfe and Osceola Area Ambulance EMTs Robyn Foster and Jim Breitmün stopped by a gathering on Carroll Street during National Night Out Aug. 7. The evening program was created to promote neighborhood spirit and police-community partnerships. *Photo by Phillip Bock*

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work for the keeper than it does for the bees, who keep busy running a complex society.

"It's fascinating," Kretzschmar said. "That's one of the reasons I'm a beekeeper."

Of the thousands of bees in a hive, only one female is designated as queen bee.

These royal insects are chosen while still an egg and are quickly nourished with "royal jelly," a substance secreted by honeybee workers that triggers the development of queen morphology, including the development of ovaries needed to lay eggs.

Other female bees, referred to as worker bees, earn their name by doing almost all of the collecting required for honey production, Kretzschmar said. From there, worker bees are further categorized into different divisions of labor such as guarding the hive, searching for nectar, gathering pollen, or fetching water.

Male bees, or drones, mainly live to reproduce and are unable to sting.

Aside from an appreciation for the bees' organized way of life, Kretzschmar harvests honey from his bees one to two times a year and has found many uses for the sweet product.

"I put it on my cereal and fruit. I even put it inside of a bandage on a scrape," Kretzschmar said.

Harvesting begins by using a smoker tool that releases the smoke of burning foliage causing the bees to gorge on or eat honey, which temporarily disables their stinging capability. Once the box housing the hives is opened, Kretzschmar must remove the bees from the comb before harvesting

the honey.

"I try to be as organic as I can, but sometimes I choose to use the chemical repellent because it means killing less bees," Kretzschmar said.

Once the honey is scraped from the wooden frames of the hive, it can be poured into a bucket and skimmed to remove any wax or wood shavings. Beekeepers also harvest other items collected by the insects including beeswax, royal jelly, and pollen for their health benefits.

Kretzschmar said even bee stings can be useful. According to the beekeeper, the venom is being tested as a treatment for multiple sclerosis and preventing arthritis.

"I intentionally have the bees sting my fingers and

hands hoping it will prevent arthritis," Kretzschmar said. "I also do it to make sure I continue to build resistance to the venom."

Though the winter months bring temperatures unsuitable for the bees, the insects do not hibernate, but keep busy inside their chamber hive.

Kretzschmar feeds the bees medication to prevent winter diseases and sugar water to be converted to honey. The bees give off heat through this ongoing process and can keep the hive at a temperature of up to 90 degrees during the colder months.

"Winter bees actually have a longer life expectancy," Kretzschmar said. "The summer bees just work, work, work."

Though Osceola cur-

rently has no regulations on beekeeping, Kretzschmar continues to look out for the area's concerns about honeybees.

"Often times people mistake honeybees for wasps," Kretzschmar said. "Honeybees are not aggressive and only become territorial when they are hungry."

Above all, through Kretzschmar's forty years of beekeeping experience, he still enjoys simply sitting outside and watching the hive.

"There really is nothing to be nervous about. They're on their own schedule," Kretzschmar said. "I just watch and learn."

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