



# 2020 Honey Letter



Four of our beehives made it through the winter well. I was a bit nonchalant with my hive splitting and weakened two of the strong hives. Two of the split hives never did well. And now I have only two hives going into the winter. It was a summer of beekeeping that required much attention and intervention which I was unable to provide. This hobby is continuously humbling and I will try to adhere to a better schedule next year. We did harvest some nice honey and I think my remaining two hives are strong, so I am optimistic about 2021.

Our lives like everyone's were upended in mid March when we abruptly canceled our ski trip and Tom rented an RV to drive to pick up my mother from Florida and bring her to Iowa. She saw several snowfalls in early spring and we enjoyed the insidious transitions between seasons. In the Gator Tom had given me for my birthday a few years ago, my mother and I explored the woodlands, hunting the emergence of wildflowers and mushrooms. We saw fields of shooting stars, Kentucky Bluebells and acres of milkweed alive with monarch butterflies. The Morels did appear but were not very strong this year.



Fortunately, the Golden Oyster Mushrooms had several flushes and with my mother we found a mother lode very accessible to us in the woods. Later in the summer we found numerous Giant Puffballs, and it was fun to share some with friends and experiment with recipes. My mother got lobsters for

Tom's Birthday and later for Father's Day and we made homemade lobster pizza with fresh sweet corn and sauteed Golden Oyster Mushrooms. Later, I dehydrated and powdered the Golden Oysters and Puffballs.

We had a big vegetable garden with over a hundred lettuce plants, thanks to our old friend Jimmy Cooke. I still have some frozen brussel sprouts and the kale is still growing!

We also walked together as a family of five the 1 1/2 mile round trip to our mailbox, with significant hills. My mother's endurance quickly improved and she probably is one of the fittest 96 year olds around. She also rode my horse, independently, and she smiled from ear to ear the entire time.



Mother and I were watching Chautauqua lectures daily, baking sourdough bread, and Tom built two wood and canvas canoes. The boys continued to practice their violins, studied with Tom for the ACT and began their college applications. Aubrey did a video memoir with my mother, and Beau read her three books.



Nearing the first trimester end of the boys' online senior year, they each have received some college acceptances and are waiting to hear from other schools.



As they turn 18, we feel blessed to have two kind, funny and hardworking young men. We are excited for their future. They will make their own decisions about where they will go to college and they have earned that.

We hope all of you enjoy a Happy Holiday Season and a blessed 2021.

Lyse, Tom, Aubrey and Beau (and new puppy, Buff)

