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The Beltane Papers
A Journal of Women's Mysteries
11506 NE 113th Pl., Kirkland, WA 98033

Lúnasa, 10,008th year of the Goddess

The Beltane Papers *exists to provide women with a safe place within which to explore and express the sacred in their lives, to educate, empower, encourage and entertain, to inspire, support and reinforce their perception of reality. Published 3 times annually.* *ISSN # 1074-3634.*

Reincarnated Beltane, 10,008th year of the Goddess (2008)

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Guiding Goddess: She buzzed around my mind for months. She whispered in my ear "Help us, tell them about us, let them know of our plight, of our gifts to them." She is called by many names, Melissa, Merope, and Austėja are just a few. She is the Bee Goddess, keeper of the nectar of the gods, seeress and healer.

Disclaimer: *The opinions and ideas of the contributors are their own and do not necessarily reflect those of all the staff members.*

The Beltane Papers
A Journal of Women's Mysteries

Lúnasa, 10,008th year of the Goddess Issue 43 - $2.50

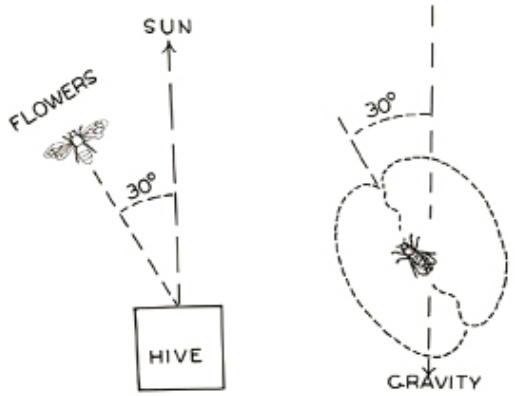
"Honey" by Shelley Walker

Dancing Bees

Bees have a language all their own. They use dance, sound and smell to tell the other bees where the flowers are. When a honeybee returns to the hive, she gives out samples of the flower's nectar to the other bees. Then she performs a dance that identifies the distance, direction, quality, and quantity of the flowers. There are two dances, the 'round' dance, and the 'waggle' dance

Honeybees use the 'round' dance when the flowers are less than 35 yards away. The round dance does not communicate any specific direction. However, the forager bee does provide the flowers' scent, which other bees use to find the flowers.

The waggle dance is used to indicate the



distance and direction of far-off food sources. This dance consists of a series of alternating left-hand and right-hand loops, interspersed by a phase in which a dancer waggles her abdomen. The duration of the waggle run represents the distance to the food location. The direction of the waggle corresponds to the direction of the flowers with respect to the sun's position.

References

PBS' Nova http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/bees/dances.html

Image courtesy of Mississippi State University http://insectzoo.

The oldest known bee is a 100 million-year-old specimen preserved in amber from the Baltic coast.

About this issue...

I've had this buzzing in my mind, whispers, pleas for help. As much as I thought I shouldn't 'plan' an issue, this buzzing would not relent. I had the proverbial "bee in my bonnet"! This was a harder issue to produce, to go looking for articles on bees. However, the Goddess (in this case Austėja) provides and some wonderful articles and essays have come together for this issue.

The voting season is upon us and I urge everyone to vote; it is our right and our responsibility. The only way democracy works is if everyone participates! See page 4 for why you should vote.

This issue is the second in the new newsletter format. I wish we had more room. I started to put things up on our website (http://thebeltanepapers.net) to supplement the magazine. This is where you will find book reviews, news, and video clips. I hope to add more content soon.

The book reviews are an important aspect of TBP's recovery. I set them up in such a way so that you can purchase them through Amazon by clicking on the image of the book. When you purchase them through our site, TBP gets 4% of the book sale. Every little bit helps. So if you feel like reviewing a book or two, send your reviews to me and I will get them up on the site.

I am also excited about the Video Clips page. They give us an opportunity to watch the writers and leaders of various Goddess and pagan movements in lectures and interviews. It also allows for a new level of creativity and community. If you have video you have found or created, contact me and let's see if we can get them up on the site as well.

On the business aspect of TBP, we are stabilizing. We have several new subscribers and back issue sales. TBP was able to print and ship this issue out of its own funds, as well as pay for two months' storage for back issues. This leaves about $250.00 in the bank toward issue 44. We have also received the last of any payments from distributors, so we will not be receiving any more big lump sums. Our sole sources

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Editor's Note: 'Bee facts' from The Sacred Bee in Ancient Times and Folklore *by Hilda Ransome, Dover Publications (April 9, 2004)*

All images unless otherwise noted are from Clipart.com

About the Cover Artist: Shelly Walker

As a child, I was always fascinated by mythology – particularly Celtic, and faery. I kept that fascination into adulthood, and now pour it into my artwork. I am inspired by stories and folklore, the natural world, the work of other artists (especially the Frouds) and my own experiences with paganism and faery. I work with whatever medium seems to be doing what I want it to; most of my paintings are a mix of watercolour, coloured pencil and acrylic.

I painted Honey during my time in London, she was inspired by a gorgeous, energetic and frenetic girl I worked with. It all came about after a photo of her, pulling a very sweet face with a pipe cleaner in her hair bent to look like antennae. She really does have eyes that wide and blue. I asked her if she would mind me painting her, she said yes and Honey was born. Thanks, Haylee!

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From http://www.fullcircleevents.org/pvp/top13.html
See "The Pagan Voting Project" at http://www.fullcircleevents.org/pvp/

13 Reasons Why Pagans Should Vote

"Decisions are made by those who show up"
Aaron Sorkin

- **Because Voting is Very Pagan!**

Many of us come from proud traditions that used a Council and other forms of the voting process to make decisions. Native Americans, Vikings, the Greeks, and other Pagan cultures valued this right highly, and fought to keep it.

Voting is an ancient Pagan tradition. Apathy, on the other hand, is a modern invention – it suits those in power very well indeed, but it disempowers you!

- **Because Pagans Know Our History:**

It's easy to say, "Never again the burning times" but actions speak louder than words. Let them know we mean it. Vote!

- **Because The Opposition Votes…A Lot:**

Our government was designed for citizen participation. If you don't vote, other people are going to make the decisions for you. There are people out there who hate us, and who want to take away our rights and freedoms. They are organized, they are active, and they vote. What about you?

- **Because Pagans Honor Our Ancestors:**

They fought long and hard for the freedoms we have today. Let us respect this heritage and use the rights they won for us all.

- **Because Pagans Have Strong Opinions:**

If you are eligible to vote, but choose not to, no one should ever have to listen to you whine about the laws and policies of this country. Don't vote? Don't complain!

- **Because Lighting a Candle Isn't Enough:**

The 2000 and 2004 Presidential Elections proved that every vote matters.

- **Because "The Supremes" Matter:**

The next President will appoint the next (2 - 3) members of the U.S. Supreme Court. They dictate what freedoms stay and what freedoms are eliminated by their interpretation of the Constitution. These people have a direct (and final!) say in issues that affect us all.

- **Because "Everything She Touches, Changes":**

Most politicians think that Pagans are a bunch of apathetic wing nuts who never vote. Why then, should they listen to us? But they watch "voting trends" the way a hawk watches a rabbit. Groups who are known to vote on certain issues have political power which they can use to promote positive change for other like-minded citizens. That said, Pagans do not all have to vote the same way or even vote as a group. What matters is that they know we're out there and that we vote.

- **Because the Personal is Political:**

Elected officials make decisions on things that matter to us personally, like the environment, jobs, reproductive freedom, education, and health care. Voting is your chance to tell them what you want.

- **Because "As Above, So Below" is Also True in Politics:**

The Federal & State government decides who gets to benefit from the tax dollars we all pay. Politicians control these purse strings, and they hand down money from above for things like college loans, animal shelters, libraries, breast cancer research, and more. Make sure that the causes and services you care about get funded. Vote!

- **Because Voting = The Power To Make Social Change:**

Continued on Page13

Honey Bees: Keepers of the Secret of Life

by Wendy L. Hawksley

"That buzzing-noise means something. You don't get a buzzing noise like that, just buzzing and buzzing, without its meaning something. If there's a buzzing noise, somebody's making a buzzing noise, and the only reason for making a buzzing-noise that I know of is because you're a bee.

And the only reason for being a bee that I know if is making honey.

And the only reason for making honey is so as I can eat it."

***The Complete Tales & Poems of Winnie-the-Pooh** by A. A. Milne, 1926*

This is my 5-year-old son's favorite quote from this book. Personally, I never really considered bees beyond the occasional "Is it in my hair?" exclamation and summertime admiration of the fatter, fuzzier ones hard at work on the purple blossoms of the butterfly bush in my yard. Most of the time we humans merely want to avoid a sting, and rarely do we consider the idea that something so tiny could possibly be important in our vast world.

However, in ancient times, the bee was an important symbol to a variety of cultures. From the Greeks to the Mayans, and many cultures in between, bees were revered. Bee deities, beekeeping, and the production of honey were especially prevalent in ancient Greek times. Mead was an intoxicating drink made of honey in Cretan culture, older and sweeter than wine. Goddesses to whom the bee was sacred included Artemis, Demeter, and Cybele. The Homeric Hymn to Hermes[1] speaks of the Thriai, three nymphs known as Melissae or honey-priestesses:

"There are three holy ones, sisters born - three virgins gifted with wings: their heads are besprinkled with white barley meal, and they dwell under a ridge of Parnassos. These are teachers of divination apart from me, the art that I practiced while yet a boy following herds, though my father paid no heed to it. From their home, they fly now here, now there, feeding on honeycomb and bringing all things to pass. And when they are inspired through eating yellow honey, they are willing to speak the truth; but if they be deprived of the gods' sweet food, then they speak falsely, as they swarm in and out together…" It certainly takes some digging to find references to the *Thriai; however, the importance of bees in Greek culture is obvious in this quote. Nectar is the fluid gathered by bees as they zip from flower to flower. This nectar is taken back to the hives and made into honey – "the gods' sweet food."*

Cave paintings in Cueve de la Arana, Spain show the oldest image of man and bee - 15,000 years ago

The sweetness of honey has led to many analogies that we hear today, such as the use of "honeyed words" of eloquence. Plato was known as the Athenian Bee, and Sophocles as the Attic Bee. While Zeus was hidden from his murderous father, he was raised on a diet of milk and honey. Nectar, with which honey is made, is known as the drink of the Greek gods. It ensured their immortality[2].

Why were bees so prized? Was it simply because they produced honey, or was there a deeper connection seen between bees and the world around us?

Consider the tholoi, or beehive tombs, of the Mediterranean and western Asia. These tombs seen throughout Greece, Turkey, and Syria originated around 3,000 B.C.E., with earlier versions found as far back as the 6th and 7th centuries B.C.E. Dartmouth College offers a few theories on the origins of the tholos tombs of the Minoan period, but there is nothing definitive[3].

If we move back to Egyptian times, we find that honey was a symbol of resurrection and bees, the creators and keepers of this symbol, were revered as the link between life and death, between the material world and the underworld. Why? Jack Tresidder suggests in "The Complete Dictionary of Symbols" (2005) that in addition to a host of qualities attributed to bees (such as diligence, purity, and selflessness, just to name a few), that bees were a resurrection symbol on tombs possibly because of their winter dormancy.

The bee is a symbol of reincarnation in Hinduism as well, sometimes pictured with the deities Krishna or Vishnu. The Celts considered the bee as a messenger of the gods and a keeper of hidden wisdom. Bees were also associated with royalty. The title bit, meaning "he of the bee", was given to the rulers of Lower Egypt.[4]

The image of the bee as a symbol of royalty has endured for thousands of years. In 1700, the Bavarian Princess Anne-Louise-Benedicte de Bourbon-Conde, took the nickname La Reine des Abeilles

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Bee Goddess: The Baltic Austeja

"Bee Goddess" Statue at the Museum of Ancient Beekeeping in Lithuania, photo courtesy of the museum

by Patricia Monaghan

As a gardener, I can't help but notice bees – their presence and their absence. This weekend I weeded around my sage patch. The blue flowers are gone, so for the first time in weeks I could get near enough to pull that pesky bit of vetch that had grown up within the sage. I have been patient because of the bees. Bees love sage and all its relatives, and these days I let weeds thrive rather than disturb bees at their buzzing work.

I am happy when I see bees swarming over the sage, tasting each flower in turn. I always take a few moments to talk to them. I don't speak their dancing language, so I am left with clumsy human speech to say, "Be welcome, bees; stay healthy, bring honey to your queen and keep her safe. Let us all survive together."

I did not always talk to bees. I respected them, as any gardener should. I was happy to see them in my garden; I planted things I knew they liked, to encourage them to visit and fertilize my garden and orchard. However, while I recognized their contributions to the food we cherish, I admit I took them somewhat for granted. Bees are part of life. I never imagined life without them.

Since I first learned of bee colony collapse disorder several years ago, however, I have come to cherish the sound of bees at work. I love to see the slight movement in my herb garden every morning when they descend to feast. I appreciate them and wish them well. Talking to the bees when they visit has become my small ritual of honoring one part of the web of life that sustains us all.

With my newly deep appreciation for bees, I have also come to respect the folk ways of the Baltic people of Latvia and Lithuania, for they had a number of rituals devoted to bees, handmaids of the goddess Austėja (sometimes spelled Austheia) who encouraged abundance in all things. She was pictured as an energetic housewife who watched over the safety of the farm and its occupants, the way bees watch over the productivity of plants. She was also a weaver, for bees were imagined as creating honeycombs with the same motions as a weaver uses to make cloth. Finally, Austėja was envisioned as a bride, for mead made from her honey was drunk at weddings; some sources contend that the term "honeymoon" came from a tradition of giving newlyweds a month's worth of mead to keep them pleasantly drunk until the honeymoon was over.

But Austeja was not only the goddess of youth, for she was invoked at all rituals involving women's life passages. Her holy day was celebrated each August, when bees actively gathered honey, some of which was offered to the goddess. Bees were believed to join in these celebrations, singing and dancing for Austėja.

> In Minoan Crete 4,000 years later the Goddess and her priestesses, dressed as bees, are shown dancing together on a golden seal found buried with the dead.

Perhaps most charmingly, the Balts claimed that people could be related through biciulyste, a word that could be translated as "beeship" on the parallel with "kinship" (a word that originally referred to people who held cattle or "kine" in common). Biciulyste was formed when bees, following a young queen, swarmed from one farm to another to establish a new hive. Because neither bees nor honey could be bought or sold, bees were believed to have judged each potential home in terms of the family's hospitality and generosity. Bees refused to live among stingy, jealous, or angry folk. In addition, bees would never sting an honest person, so only good farmers could gather honey. The farming folk followed the swarming bees until they chose a new location. The tenants of the new farm were thereafter in "beeship" with those from whose land their bees had come, and special holidays were celebrated between the families.

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The Bee Colony Collapse Disorder

By Rohvannyn Shaw

We all know domesticated honeybees are in trouble. Colonies are dying off at a worrisome rate, with beekeepers powerless to prevent it. Farmers are forced to plant fewer acres of crops because of the shortage of available pollinators. Why is this happening? What can we do? Chillingly, we are still not certain.

Bees do a lot for us. They pollinate our crops, make honey and wax, and provide ambiance on a warm summer's day. They are also fascinating creatures. The bulk of any hive is made up of sterile, female workers that collect the nectar, spread the pollen from flower to flower, and care for the young. In the wintertime, they huddle toward the middle of the hive, shivering to keep the temperature constant. In the summertime, they will fan the air with their wings, helping cool everyone off. If left undisturbed, worker bees are relatively non-aggressive. They also use body movement and chemical markers to communicate the location of good food sources to their fellow bees. Drones are the only males and they are comparatively few. They exist only to fertilize the queen, who does nothing but lay eggs unless the hive decides to swarm off to create another hive. Domesticated bees are a very specific strain, bred over the years to support cultivated farming. In modern times, hives, or colonies, are carried on trucks and moved from place to place, rented to whoever needs their fields pollinated. The Bee Colony Collapse Disorder affects these bees most harshly.

> In 2000, the total U.S. crop value that was wholly dependent on honey bee pollination was estimated to exceed 15 billion dollars.

A large percentage of modern agriculture requires domesticated honeybees to function. According to the USDA, bees pollinate $15 billion worth of crops every year in the United States. [1] This includes oranges, blueberries, apples, almonds, cucumbers, and peas. More than 130 different crops in the US, and even more worldwide, depend on them. [3] Most modern farming is a monoculture, one crop grown over a large area. Wild bees don't want to pollinate that, because they usually require a more varied diet and range. The problem isn't limited to the US either. Bee colonies in the UK are also affected, and so are colonies all over the rest of the Northern Hemisphere.

As can be easily imagined, this affects every single person who eats food grown in the Northern Hemisphere, even if they never touch a drop of honey. The World Bank states that food prices have gone up 83 percent in the last three years. These will continue to rise unless the decline in honeybees is resolved. One blueberry grower stated that he would have to increase his prices tenfold or go out of business if the beekeeping industry were lost. [2] With so much at stake, this is clearly a serious problem.

However, what is Bee Colony Collapse Disorder? This

disorder is characterized by no or a low number of adult honeybees present in the hive, but no dead ones. Often there is still honey in the hive and immature bees are present. [3] The first cases of this happened 20 years ago, but at that time it was associated with the Varroa mite, a parasitic mite that carries pathogens to honeybees. They have caused a large amount of damage to bee colonies, especially in the winters of 1995-1996 and 2000-2001 when colony deaths in northern states ranged between 50% and 100% in most beekeeping operations. Scientists are still looking for ways to control the infestations when they occur. The mites are pesticide-resistant, which causes quite a problem. (4) Additionally, there is a lower rate of bees going feral. This last year, the winter of 2007-2008, the percentage of bee deaths rose to 36%, more than twice the rate of normal winter die-off. [5]

We don't know exactly what causes bee colony collapse disorder, but there are several leading theories. The most popular of these is that it is caused by the Israeli Acute Paralysis Virus, which can be transmitted by the Varroa mite. [3] A team led by scientists from the USDA's Agricultural Research Service, Penn State University, and Columbia University did a genetic survey that mapped out all pathogens present in samples from 30 colonies that had CCD and 21 colonies that did not, taking them from four different locations in the United States.

This was possible with a new method of sequencing the genetic material from both the healthy and unhealthy bees. Since we now have a complete gene map for honeybees, the researchers were able to identify all potential pathogens present. Both CCD and non-CCD bees were found to harbor six symbiotic types of bacteria and eight bacterial groups, 81 fungi from four

lineages, and seven viruses. The only pathogen found in almost all samples from honey bee colonies with CCD, but not found in non-CCD colonies, was the Israeli Acute Paralysis Virus (IAPV, so named because it was discovered by researchers at Hebrew University), a dicistrovirus that can be transmitted by the Varroa mite. It was found in 96.1 percent of the CCD-bee samples.

From 1971 to 2006, there was a dramatic reduction in the number of feral (gone wild) honeybees in the US (now almost absent)

It is important to note that even though most of the sampled CCD bees had the IAPV virus, this does not yet prove a cause and effect connection between that and the Colony Collapse. There may be other contributing factors that stress the bee colonies. Researchers are still trying to find out why nearly 4% had the disorder but did not have the virus. If we can figure out what causes the virus to replicate, or what helps the bees resist it, we may be able to control the CCD better. The next step would be to expose healthy bees to IAPV under controlled conditions and see if CCD develops. [3]

Part of the reason why we are still not sure if IAPV causes the collapse is because in Australia, the disorder is unknown. CCD is a Northern Hemisphere phenomenon only. The virus is most likely not acting alone. It may be dependent on the Varroa mite, because Australian bees do not have Varroa in their colonies. Australian bees also seem to be resistant to IAPV and do not come down with symptoms. In addition, the symptoms of IAPV and CCD are slightly different. With CCD, the workers simply disappear. But with IAPV, the workers die close to the hive after developing shivering wings and paralysis. Other factors could include pesticides, pollutants, climate change, and genetic weaknesses bred into the bees. There is evidence that some bees carry genetic resistance to the disorder. [1] Bee colonies in Israel, for example, have IAPV but it affects them differently there. Some people speculate that the virus entered the US through infected honeybees imported from Australia, but the picture is not complete. [5] For a time, some researchers thought that cell phone radiation might be harming the bees, but this has been disproven.

Now we know how terrible the consequences of CCD are, and that we need to do more research so we can find the causes for it. What are researchers doing to continue that work? Disturbingly, bee studies are both under-staffed and under-funded. Maryann Frazier of Penn State University stated that the bee research community is quite small, and that the research and money directed toward this project have been minimal. At the time of the interview, she also stated that there are some 2,000 samples on shelves waiting to be analyzed by the federal government. It costs $200 to analyze each one and there simply isn't the money for it.

There have been campaigns to persuade lawmakers to allocate more funding for CCD research, but successes, as of this year, have been inadequate for researchers' needs. The recent five-year farm bill authorizes, but does not guarantee, $20 million in new funding for bee-related studies. That bill was approved over President Bush's veto. Private industries are attempting to pitch in as well, with Haagen-Dazs and Burt's Bees being the two main contributors in a recent McClatchy-Tribune article. [6] At the time of that article, another $4.1 million Department of Agriculture probe was scheduled to be announced.

Much of this funding would never have been raised without the concerted efforts of growers, businesses, and other concerned individuals. Even though the money raised so far is not enough to meet the needs of the researchers, it is still a hopeful sign and a lesson to us all.

What if there is no cure for IAPV, or CCD? We may have to face that reality. It is essentially impossible to treat or vaccinate bees against viruses of any kind, but some are trying to breed bees that are more disease resistant. Keeping other factors, such as mites, under control will be a key element of any strategy. [7]

Moreover, what if we cannot stop CCD and all the domesticated honeybees die? Contrary to what some say, we will not see an end to all life on planet Earth. Food prices on some crops will rise sharply, and certain crops will become very rare. Wild bees, or disease resistant Africanized bees, may take over pollination in some cases. Unfortunately, wild bees have declined due to other factors, such as loss of habitat and pollution.

In parts of China where pollution levels are so high that all bees have died, some growers hand-pollinate their fruit trees with feathers tied to long sticks. This practice has gone on for more than 20 years. It is a labor-intensive, painstaking process but allows their trees to bear fruit. With about 15% of foods Americans eat depending on honeybees, and another 15% of food based on animals that eat those plants, our diet would certainly change drastically. [8]

The domestic honeybee, that tireless, buzzing little worker, is a cornerstone of our diet, our economy, and our lives. We would all be poorer for her absence. Now that she is in danger, we all need to work together to help her. We can urge our state and federal representatives for more funding, we can promote awareness, and we can promote corporations who support our goals. We can educate, and we can act. If we all work together, then the bee researchers will be able to get the funding they need to do more complete surveys. Science is our friend in this, because without it we would never have known about IAPV in the first place. It is only through research that we will find a solution.

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(2) **Associated Press, June 26, 2008,** Stephanie S. Gar-

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MY BEE CAME BACK TO SAY GOODBYE

by Mama Donna Henes

For years, there has been a certain auspicious day every spring when a bumblebee would fly onto my terrace garden where it would hover contentedly every day, all day long, throughout the entire summer, until a certain day in autumn when it would fly away.

This ritual visitation took place without fail for more than 15 years until a few years ago when my bee stopped showing up. I say "my bee." But was it? Could it possibly have been the same bee for a decade and a half? How long do bees live?

Or did my fuzzy fat friend select a successor who also passed the mantle when her vacation time was up? But whether or not it was the same bee, it was definitely my bee. My buddy, my constant summer companion, my nectar-gathering compatriot.

In Hellenistic Greece, bees were understood to be related to and a manifestation of the muse. My bee was certainly an inspiration to me as well, and I missed her visits dearly. And so did my flowers.

My bee isn't the only one who stopped showing up. Millions upon millions of bees all over the world have been abandoning their hives and simply disappearing. Scientists named this mysterious phenomenon "Colony Collapse Disorder."

Silkworms and bees are the only 'domesticated' insects, as we keep them for the purpose of harvesting their product.

If they are dying, they have chosen to do it in private, because large numbers of their corpses have not been found. Last year I found three dead bee bodies on the sidewalk just outside of my building. I saved their remains and added them to my growing collection of dead bumblebees. I keep my beautiful box filled with dead bees on my healing altar, where I pray for their well being.

In some areas over sixty percent of the American honeybee population has died or disappeared during the past ten years, and this trend is continuing around the world. The potential results of this trend are terrifying. After all, bees have pollinated one in three bites of all that we consume.

In 1923 Rudolf Steiner predicted the dire state of the honeybee today. He said that within 50 to 80 years, we would see the consequences of mechanizing the forces that had previously operated organically in the beehive – including breeding queen bees artificially.

Well, I could have told them that the Queens don't take interference kindly. And now they are having their royal revenge – a terrible, drastic, exacting retribution, which maybe, just maybe, might force us to rethink our precarious relationship with Mother Nature.

Last week, my bee came back. I was completely delighted, overtaken by the depth and passion of my joy at our reunion. She hovered in front of my face for a moment then landed on my leg, and stayed there for a really long time, our bodies buzzing in unison.

Soon I noticed that she was uncharacteristically lethargic. Oh, no! Did she come back to die on me? I began to stroke her back ever so softly. I whispered prayers and gave her reiki. Then, because I had to leave, I placed her on the dirt of one of my flowering plants. If she was going to die, I wanted it to be in nature.

When I returned home a few hours later, the first thing I did was rush out to check on the bee, half expecting to see her lying on her back with her legs sticking up in the air.

But she was gone. Just gone.

"Like the bees from which this exhibition has drawn its name, we are individuals, yet we are, most surely, like the bees, a group, and as a group we have, over the millennia, built ourselves a hive, our home. We would be foolish, to say the least, to turn our backs on this carefully and beautifully constructed home especially now, in these uncertain and unsettling times." – The Museum of Jurassic Technology, Venice, CA

Donna Henes is an internationally renowned urban shaman, eco-ceremonialist, award-winning author, popular speaker, and workshop leader whose joyful celebrations of celestial events have introduced ancient traditional rituals and contemporary ceremonies to millions of people in more than 100 cities since 1972. She has

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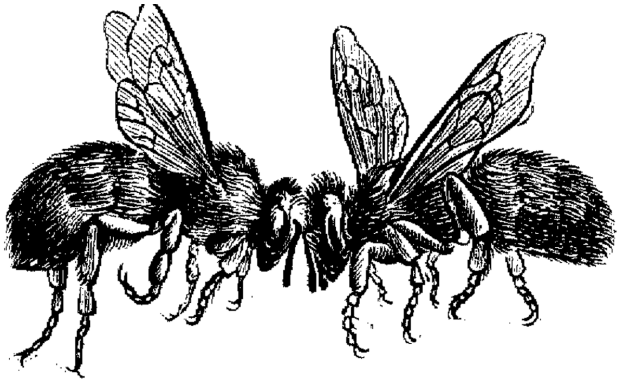
GARDENING FOR BEES

by JD Walker



Before the appearance of Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD), Varroa mites, tracheal mites, hive beetles, and declining habitat stressed bee populations. CCD simply complicates an already difficult situation. Given how much the world depends on bees to pollinate crops, everyone from the homeowner to the apartment dweller should pitch in to help these beneficial insects.

Fortunately, helping local bee populations is not hard. It's as easy as beautifying the home landscape with a wide variety of flowering plants. There is no reason why aspiring gardeners in apartments can't create hanging baskets and container gardens that help support bee populations. To maximize the bounty, think vertical. Plant a trellis of flowering vines such as sweet peas, hyacinth beans, and clematis.

For those who have in-ground space, in addition to diversity, it helps to incorporate plants of different heights. Mix a few tall plants into the landscape. Sunflowers, Brazilian verbena, and liatris can grab the attention of passing bees and lead them to shorter flowers in the landscape.

Bees like open flowers like those on the perennial hibiscus or fat-tubular flowers that they can crawl into like petunias. Plants that produce flat heads, like yarrow, allow bees to scamper over the petals while they collect nectar.

Any flower that has a strong fragrance will attract bees. Think wisteria and lilacs. Often, flowers that last only one day, such as the daylily, will have large amounts of nectar, an obvious bee magnet. Some growers believe that bees prefer blue, purple, and yellow flowers, but do not limit the garden color scheme. A judicious mix of colors will do.

Members of the daisy family, Cosmos, Zinnia,, Dahlia and Sunflowers attract lots of native bees

Oddly enough, the perfect flower for butterflies or hummingbirds will not necessarily suit bees. This is because butterflies and hummingbird like long, tubular flowers that are just too tight a fit for bulky bees. If possible, select single flowering plant varieties. For example, most people are familiar with that popular summer flower, the marigold. A traditional African marigold has a pom-pom like flower that will not draw as many bees as the petite, single-flowering Signet marigold. For the same reason, a cushion mum is nice, but bees will probably prefer one of the daisy-flowering mums.

To honor the deities, consider planting flowers from the homelands of those entities. Bees were among the creatures sacred to Artemis (Diana). Pan was a beekeeper and protector of bees. Romans knew Mellonia as the goddess of bees. Plant rosemary, lemon balm, mints, and marjoram from the Mediterranean area in honor of these deities.

In India, Vishnu is sometimes shown as a blue bee alight a lotus flower and Krishna is seen in some drawings with a blue bee on his forehead. A little less well known, Kama, the Indian god of love shoots his arrows from a bow that has a string made of bees. All of these entities can be honored with plantings of bougainvillea, lotus, jasmine, and rose.

Lithuanians had Austeja, the bee goddess as well as Builas, the god who represented the drone bees. In Russia, Zosim protected bees and beekeepers. These deities would be at home with Lithuania's national plant, rue, or Russia's mallows, columbines and bellflowers.

The first plants that come to mind when the discussion turns to attracting bees are those with prominent flowers. However, one way to extend the season is to focus on some very ordinary plants. Hollies bloom early in the spring, in most climates. Bees will swarm the flowers on hollies to take advantage of this early nectar source. As the season continues, bees move on to laurels, ligustrum, cleyera, clethra, crepe myrtle, beautybush and more.

Bees love diversity – the more, the better. In fact, it's easier to talk about what not to plant than to list all the plants bees will enjoy visiting. While the number of plants that will draw bees to the garden is numerous, there are a few that should be avoided. Some flowers make honey dangerous for humans to eat. Others can kill the bees.

California buckeye flowers can cause young workers to be deformed when they are reared on honey made from this plant. It will also cause queens to lay fewer eggs or produce nothing but drone bees. Yellow jessamine is the state flower of South Carolina and a popular vine to trellis over mailboxes and fences. However, when young worker bees eat the honey, they die. Astragalus has wonderful healing applications for humans. For bees, it is deadly. The same is true of false hellebore.

Several common landscape plants can pose problems for bees including azaleas, rhododendrons, and kalmias. Nectar from the catalpa tree can literally give bees a buzz just like alcohol can for humans.

Those Pagan gardeners who are fond of baneful herbs should beware. Honey produced from datura plants, belladonna flowers, oleander, monkshood and henbane can be toxic to humans.

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BUBBLY BREWS

By Rohvannyn Shaw

One of the most pleasant parts of summer is the enjoyment of a cold, fizzy drink in the shade on a hot day. Most people fulfill this desire with one of many commercial carbonated beverages, both alcoholic and non-alcoholic. However, there is another way to have that same simple joy, a way that is natural, flavorful, surprisingly cheap, and most importantly, easy!

Before soda water was invented, before the advent of artificial carbonation, there was another way to do it by means of that most wonderful of organisms, yeast. The same stuff that rises your Lammas bread and gives wine its 'kick' can also give your beverages a lift, turning a tame tea into a wonderful, bubbling potion!

Many folks out there know this already. But what many may not know, is how simple it can be to do. These methods are great for folks that have allergies or food sensitivities, as they can custom-brew whatever they like. It's just another opportunity to bring a little magic into your kitchen, and into your life. To demonstrate this, I will describe how to make a variety of ginger ales and let that illustrate how to make all kinds of other enjoyable drinks.

But first, let's consider yeast. Though it looks like a dry powder, or small round tan-colored grains, it is really a living organism in its dormant stage. It's not a plant or animal, but a fungus. Wild yeast exists in the air, and the differing strains of yeast living on grapes are one reason why various vintages of wine taste different. But for our purposes, we use dry baker's yeast because it is easy to get, inexpensive, and we can control what kind of yeast gets into our brew.

Water, warmth, and sugar bring the yeast back to life and let it multiply. As the yeast consumes the sugars in your bread or beverage, it produces both alcohol and carbon dioxide. This is the process known as fermentation. These recipes only have a tiny amount of alcohol in them, not enough for any effect. This is because the yeast will only be given enough time to produce the CO2 that produces the bubbles.

Since it is alive, yeast can be delicate and as such should not be used at too hot a temperature, or too cold a temperature. You can keep yeast in the refrigerator or freezer, but if you want it to grow, it needs to be warm enough. Normal room temperature is fine for most brewing purposes, but baking or boiling will kill it. Too much CO2 will kill the yeast too, which is why homemade pop does not become alcoholic very easily.

Here is what we will need for our ginger ale:

- 1 gallon of water
- Fresh ginger, three or four tablespoons grated or chopped
- 1-1/2 cups of honey or 2 cups sugar
- 1 lemon or 1 large lime
- 1/2 teaspoon yeast
- Something to mix in, a big pot, or one of those gallon-sized plastic ice cream buckets
- A gallon's worth of plastic pop bottles (two 2-liter bottles or four1-liter) and a funnel

Take the chopped or grated or mashed ginger, root of fire and passion and success. Pour a cup or two of boiling water over the ginger and let it sit, forming a very strong tea. While you wait, juice the lemon or lime and add this to the water once it's cooled a bit. Put the gallon of water into the large vessel and mix in the honey or sugar. If using honey, you will need to warm the water somewhat to enhance the mixing. Taste from time to time until you have just the right sweetness ... remember that it will be slightly less sweet because of the action of the yeast. Add the yeast to the mixture. Strain the ginger tea, pressing the solids to make sure you get every last bit of juice out. Pour this into the big mixing container too. Swish it around a few times with hand or spoon.

Once everything is thoroughly mixed, it's time to bottle. Dip the mixture up with a cup and pour it through the funnel into the bottles, leaving a little space in the top for expansion, then cap tightly. It's nice to do this over a sink. Let the bottles sit for 1-3 days depending on how warm your weather is. The warmer the environment, the faster the yeast will work. You can squeeze the bottles to see how pressurized it is getting. This one of the reasons why we use plastic – the other reason is that we don't want to have to buy a bunch of glass bottles that are properly stressed for pressurization. Glass might shatter or burst; plastic usually just stretches a bit and thus can handle it just fine. When the bottles are ready, put them in a cool place or the refrigerator for several hours before tasting. Also, open them carefully.

The last instruction is this: Find a nice place in the shade, and perhaps a good book or a friend to talk to. Pour your brew into a tall, frosty glass. Take a moment to meditate on the blessings of roots, bees, and wonderful yeast. And drink up!

Other brews can be made with an incredible variety of substances. You can buy extracts for your favorite kinds of soda, everything from root beer to cola, for about five dollars. These all come with recipes, typically require four pounds of sugar and four gallons of water, and do not con-

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Lithuanian Honey Recipes

In honor of the Goddesss Austeja I am including a few Lithuanian recipes that use honey

Meduoliai (Honey Cakes)

Honey cakes are made with honey. They must be of a dark color, which is obtained when honey is boiled or by adding burnt sugar to the batter. Sour cream or sour milk are used to give sponginess to honey cakes and baking soda is used as a leavening agent. The taste of honey cakes depends on quantity and assortment of flavorings used. The seasonings used most often and quantities are: 2 tablespoons ground cinnamon, 2 tablespoons ground allspice, 4 teaspoons ground cloves, 1 tablespoon powdered orange peel and 4 teaspoons ground ginger.

The special quality of honey cakes is that they taste better when aged.

1/2 k (1 lb) honey
1/2 k (1 lb) flour
3 eggs
1 cup sour cream
1/2 cup butter
1/2 cup sugar
1 teaspoon baking soda
2 tablespoons seasoning

Boil honey on low heat, about 10 minutes, cool. Cream egg

yolks with sugar and add to honey, add seasonings and mix well. Add melted butter, sour cream beaten with soda and flour. Blend all ingredients and fold in beaten egg whites. Pour batter into baking pan lined with greased paper. Bake in preheated oven at 325F/160C, for about 30-45 minutes. Cool cake in baking pan.

Meduoliai Grybukai (Honey Mushrooms)

1/2 k (1 lb) flour
2 egg yolks
1 whole egg
3 tablespoons butter
1 cup honey
1 cup sugar
1 teaspoon baking soda
2 tablespoons sour cream
2 teaspoons seasonings

Icing
1 cup powdered sugar
1 egg white
juice of 1/2 lemon
1 teaspoon cocoa powder

Heat sugar in skillet until dark brown. Make dough using all ingredients. Dough should be quite hard. Let dough rest in cool spot. Divide dough in half. From one half make mushroom caps, walnut size rounds with an indentation on one side, place hole down on baking sheet. Make stems from other half of dough. Roll finger thick pieces, about 4 cm/2 inches long. Place next to caps and bake in preheated oven at 325F/160C, for about 25-30 minutes. To make icing beat egg white with powdered sugar and lemon juice. When caps and stems are done, glue stems into caps with white icing, and ice stems with white icing. Add cocoa powder to remaining icing, mix well and ice mushroom caps. Place iced mushrooms in warm oven to dry icing.

These recipes and more can be found at:
http://ausis.gf.vu.lt/eka/food/sweets.html

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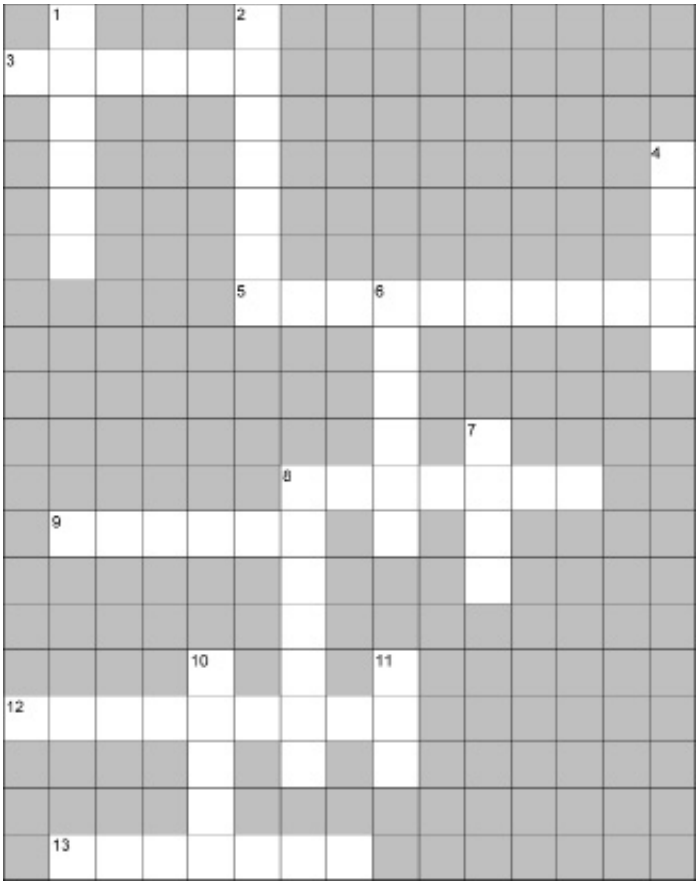
The Bee's Buzz



Across

3. What sex are the worker bees?
5. What is the art of bee-keeping called?
8. How do bees talk to each other?
9. What are baby bees called?
12. What do bees do when they hop from flower to flower?
13. What is a honeycomb made of?

Down

1. What do bees use to make honey?
2. What names comes from Greek and means bee?
4. What do you call the bee that lays eggs?
6. What is a community of bees called?
7. How many eyes does a honey bee have?
8. What name in Hebrew means bee?
10. Where do bees live?
11. What color are bees blind to?

Crossword Puzzle Solution on page 15

*Continued from **About This Issue** on page 3*

of income are subscriptions, back issue sales, and book sales now.

This issue was produced with the help of three new volunteers, Wendy Hawksley, Rohvannyn Shaw, and Katja Thomas, whose skills on proofing and editing, content selection and even writing on demand have made this issue wonderful. Working with them is a delight and I thank them for all their hard work. We are blessed to have the new artist Shelley Walker's 'Honey' gracing our cover/ Special thanks goes to Patricia Monaghan and Mama Donna Hanes, who are so supportive of TBP, and who too wrote articles on very short notice, as well as a new writer, JD Walker.

In closing, I hope this issue causes at least a little change and action. Find out what you can do to help the bees. Humans may be at the root of their demise, but we are also the only ones who can find a solution and save them. See what you can do to help; search the Internet with "save the bees" and you will find lots of information on bees and how you can help them.

Blessed Bee! Lisé Quinn

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*Continued from **13 Reasons why Pagans Should Vote** on page 4*

Don't believe us? Take a look at women's lives before they had the power of the vote, and see how different things are now. Then look at the struggle for civil rights (including the right to vote) by people of color No one handed their rights to these folks – they had to demand them. And many were beaten, jailed, and killed in the process.

Today, people in other countries are literally dying for the chance to vote because they know how important it is. Social change is only possible when we stand up to be counted. So stand up!

- **Because We Want "No Taxation Without (Equal) Representation":**

In Congress only 13 percent of the members are people of color, and only 14 percent are women. Want to change that ratio? Vote!

- **Because That Sound You Hear is a Culture Clash:**

Right now, there are two major political parties in the U.S. These parties see the world in very different ways and each will make different decisions. Their choices will directly affect your future. Meanwhile, minority opinions still struggle to be heard.

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*Continued from **Honey Bees: Keepers of the Secrest of Life** on page 5*

or Queen of Bees. She even went so far as to create her own little order known as the Order of the Honey Bee.

Unfortunately, the life of a Queen Bee is hardly glamorous. Her purpose in nature is not to control the hive, but rather to reproduce. The worker bees wait on her wing and foot, and it is easy to see why: A well-mated queen can lay a stock of about 2,000 eggs (more than her own body weight)

per day in the spring.

The Greek, Egyptian, Hindu, and Celtic cultures are just a few that attributed significance to the existence of our fine yellow-striped friends. Native Americans and even the Christians prized the bee for not just its capability to produce honey, but for its industriousness, its example of community, and its steadfastness. Today the beehive is one of the principal emblems of the Masonic lodge, which honors the ancient Greek, Egyptian, and Hindu beliefs about the bee's importance in the world.

As an animal totem, the appearance of the bee in your life can mean many things. It could be giving you a nudge to get back to work, or suggesting that you need to get busy with something that needs doing. Perhaps it is telling you to slow down and appreciate the fruits of your labor, or encouraging you to take on that seemingly impossible task. When a bee appears, consider what Winnie the Pooh said: "That buzzing noise means something."

Recent magazine reading brought the issue of colony collapse disorder to my attention. My abhorrence of all things insect changed to concern for the state of their existence today. Bees may make many a person run in the opposite direction at the sight of them. However, they are beneficial insects that simply do not receive the appreciation they deserve.

Without honey, there would be fewer aromatic breads baking, no sweet golden spreads for scones, no mead to drink; we could not soothe a sore throat naturally with a cup of honey-sweetened tea. Honey is full of anti-bacterial properties and is currently being studied as a possible treatment to MRSA (methicillin-resistant staph) infections.

Without bees, there would be no honey, no pollination, and no flowers in the spring or summer. Ours would be a world without color or sweetness.

Perhaps we should return to those times when honey was prized, rather than taking it for granted that it can be found on the grocery store shelf in bottles by the dozen, to a time when the honeybee was respected as a messenger of the gods, the maker of a food prized for its culinary and medicinal properties, and the keepers of the secrets to resurrection, reincarnation, and renewal.

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Wendy L. Hawksley is a homeschooling mom, writer, genealogist, and High Priestess living in central Delaware with her husband and son. Her work has appeared in a variety of Pagan periodicals

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*Continued from **Bee Goddess: The Baltic Austėja** on page 6*

Bees were considered related to people in another way. There were two words in the Lithuanian language for "death," one of which was used only to refer to humans and bees, with a separate word employed for the deaths of other beings. If anyone found a dead bee, she buried it in a tiny grave in the earth, just as a person might be buried. Through these rituals, the Baltic people recognized the human relationship with and reliance on bees, something that to our peril we have taken for granted for too long.

Patricia Monaghan is the author of a number of books on goddess studies, including The Goddess Path (Llewellyn Publications) and The Red-Haired Girl from the Bog (New World Library). She is just completing a two-volume illustrated edition of her Goddesses and Heroines, which will be published next year by Praeger/Greenwood.

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*Continued from **Within the Silent Hive** on page 8*

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Rohvannyn Shaw is an artist, pilot, science fiction and fantasy writer, seeker and priestess. She would like to thank her best friend for kind support and editing assistance. She has previously published two articles in this magazine under the name R. Plassman, and has recently updated her website. It can be found at: http://www.freewebs.com/starmother/index.htm

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published four books, a CD, an acclaimed quarterly journal, and writes a column for UPI (United Press International) Religion and Spirituality Forum. Mama Donna, as she is affectionately called, maintains a ceremonial center, spirit shop, ritual practice, and consultancy in Exotic Brooklyn, NY, where she works with individuals, groups, institutions, municipalities, and corporations to create meaningful ceremonies for every imaginable occasion.

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www.DonnaHenes.net

www.MamaDonnasSpiritShop.com/

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A few of any of these plants probably won't cause disaster. Like a lot of Mother Nature's creatures, bees have a built-in aversion to plants that are toxic to them. However, mass plantings could have a negative effect especially if bees can't find any other pollen source. Certainly, the beekeeper would want to avoid locating a beehive in a large grouping of any of these plants.

Here are a few more practical gardening tips that will benefit the local bee population:

- Limit the use of pesticides. Even some organic pesticides can have an adverse affect on bees. Try to rely instead on good housekeeping techniques in the garden and natural predators.
- Don't spray pesticides while bees are active. That means holding off in the early morning and evening.
- Powdered insecticides can pose more of a problem in the garden than liquid ones. Liquid chemicals dry. Powdered chemicals cling to plants and to bees that then carry the problem back to the hive.
- Plan a garden that has something blooming throughout the growing season. Don't just rely on annuals and perennials. Flowering shrubs and ornamental trees from fruit to birch give bees a reason to hang around.
- Make certain to have a water source nearby. Bees will visit birdbaths so this ornamental landscape feature can do double duty.

Bees have hovered quietly in the background of modern society for a long time, all the while helping to support our civilization. Usually, they only receive attention at the outdoor family gathering when somebody gets stung. It's time people everywhere took notice and helped these tiny creatures for the good of us all.

(No author bio provided)

*Continued from **My Bee Came Back to Say Goodbye** on page 9*

tain preservatives or other additives.

Homebrewed beverages, even when using commercial extracts, certainly do not contain the high-fructose corn syrup that is so terrible for your blood sugar levels, unless you add it for yourself. Even white cane sugar doesn't cause as many health problems as the high-fructose corn syrup. It has also been shown not to trigger the onset of diabetes quite as easily. You can also experiment with different kinds of teas. Just make sure the flavor is strong enough before you start. If you want a lower calorie drink, just use less sugar. This is not an exact science; you can change the proportions to suit your taste and your needs in an almost infinite manner. Feel free to experiment, and most importantly, enjoy!

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See author bio at the end of the article "Within The Silent Hive"

Crossword Puzzle Solution

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