

The Wonder of Bees

That 16-ounce jar of honey in your pantry exists only because tens of thousands of bees flew some 112,000 miles in a relentless pursuit of nectar gathered from 4.5 million flowers. That's the observation of Eric Miller, writing an article, "Shock and Awe" for *Books and Culture* (September/October 2006).

"Every one of those foraging bees was female," Miller said. "By the time each died – living all of six weeks during honey-making season – she had flown about 500 miles in 20 days outside the hive." As these bees were flying themselves to death, production inside the hive continued with stupendous efficiency, he said, as follows:

A bee brings nectar to the hive, carried tidily in her "honey stomach." The bee is greeted by a younger, homebody receiver bee that relieves her of her load. A receiver bee deposits nectar into a cell, reducing its water content and raising its sugar level by fanning it with her wings and regurgitating it up to 200 times, killing microbes along the way. More bees surround this cell and others and fan them with their wings 25,000 times or so, turning nectar into honey. When the honey is ripe, wax specialists arrive to cap off the cells.



"That is how every single ounce of every single honey pot, bottle or jar in the world – hundreds of thousands of them – is brought into being," Miller explains.

"Every gulp of raw honey is a distinct, unique, unadulterated medley of plant flavor, a sweet, condensed garden in your mouth," writes Holley Bishop, an amateur beekeeper.

Just consider how God orchestrated the production of honey. And in the work of Life Care, Century Park and Life Care at Home, the disciplines of each community must be orchestrated with precision and commitment to produce sweet outcomes.

– Beecher Hunter