

ONTARIO BEE

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BEE WITH THE CREDIT UNION

EVENT RAISES AWARENESS AND SUPPORTS BEEKEEPING

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In honour of the important role that honey bees play in pollinating our plants and keeping our ecosystems healthy, St. Stanislaus - St. Casimir's Polish Parishes Credit Union organized an event this past summer, highlighting the importance of honey bees to their members and local community. "BEE with the Credit Union" was held on August 7th, 2022 at the John Paul II Polish Cultural Centre in Mississauga, inviting children, youth, and adults to an event devoted to ecological beekeeping.

The event had several attractions for the public, including honey tasting, games, activities, contests, and free t-shirts for the children. Additionally, there was a lottery with several prizes, including the grand prize: a complete assembled hive kit!

For beekeeping enthusiasts, the event provided lectures and shows presented by professionals in the beekeeping industry and a chance to discuss beekeeping issues and topics. The first lecture was on the basics of bee biology and beekeeping equipment, presented by Andrew Pitek, a commercial beekeeper and beekeeping technologist at Niagara College. The lecture provided the audience with a basic understanding of how a honey bee colony functions, from the fundamental distinction of a queen, workers, and drones, to the understanding of a colony acting as a superorganism. Andrew also provided a demonstration of the components of a hive and

allowed the audience to interact and familiarize themselves with beekeeping equipment after the talk.

The second speaker was Piotr Dejnicky, a hobby beekeeper who presented on various methods of expanding an apiary. The presentation went over some of Piotr's personal experiences of splitting colonies as well as introducing queens and queen cells.

The final speaker was another hobby beekeeper, Krzysztof Dociuk, who presented on the use of a Flow Hive in Ontario. Krzysztof spoke about his experiences with the hive setup along with numerous pictures and videos of the equipment in action in his own apiary. He also brought the Flow Hive in for demonstration, which was a big attraction for many beekeepers in attendance.

The event saw nearly 10,000 people drop in throughout the day. While raising awareness about the importance of honey bees and the beekeeping industry in Ontario and Canada, the Credit Union also collected donations to save the bees, with all proceeds being donated to the Ontario Beekeepers' Association.

After the event, the Credit Union invited board members of the Ontario Beekeepers' Association to their headquarters to present them with a cheque for \$2,000 that had been donated at the event. This year, the event will be held on May 21, 2023 at the John Paul II Cultural Centre in Mississauga.

