



Veronica Appia/Metroland

Karin Tomosky-Chambers looks after the hives at Willow Grove Heritage Honey Bee Farm.

What you need to know about honey bees and swarm season

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It's spring, and for honey bees, that means swarm season. But if you see a swarm on your property, there's no reason to be alarmed, Milton beekeeper Karin Tomosky-Chambers says.

Here's what you need to know about honey bees this season:

Panicking around a bee (or swarm of bees) is never a good idea

What your parents taught you is true: if you don't move, you won't be stung (in most cases, anyway).

When a bee lands on you, there is no need to panic, Tomosky-Chambers says. Rather than attempting to sting you, the bee is likely licking the salt from your skin, as it requires that salt to produce honey.

However, it can sense your fear, she added. That means, if you begin to panic, the bee may feel threatened and retaliate as a result.

Honey bees don't sting very often

Generally speaking, honey bees don't sting very often, because when they do, they leave behind the stinger, as well as part of their abdomen, and do not survive.

Bees swarm when they are looking for a new home

There are plenty of reasons why bees swarm, but they are all centred around the need to leave one hive in search of another home.

Overcrowding, or a dislike for the queen bee, are two potential reasons why bees would choose to leave their current home.

If you see a swarm, leave it alone

Some people will see a

swarm on their property and try to spray it with insecticide, or get rid of it in some way. Don't do this, Tomosky-Chambers advises.

These bees are harmless and will not attack, especially when in swarming mode. Also, they will eventually go away on their own. Usually, bees will remain for four or five days in swarms, she added.

Be cognizant of the pesticides that are on your plants

Tomosky-Chambers says certain stores continue to sell plants that contain neonicotinoids, which are used to kill weeds, but are also fatal to bees. The use of neonicotinoids was a main factor in the bee colony collapse of the past decade.

Tomosky-Chambers advises residents to be aware of the pesticides used on their plants and to stay away from neonicotinoids.

Milton's Cox Automotive Canada No Excuses campaign thrives

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Cox Automotive Canada team members, including those at Manheim Toronto and Ready Logistics in Milton, donated to more than 13 Canadian organizations during this year's No Excuses campaign.

The initiative encourages employees to support local organizations through volunteerism, donations and giving back.

It's part of Cox Automotive Canada's Cox Cares corporate social responsibility program.

Team members gathered together late into the evening to volunteer two hours each to create, design, and wrap mental wellness baskets for Halton Women's Place, whip-

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ping up 50 mental wellness baskets for the women and children in need at the shelter. Each basket came complete with something for touch, smell, taste, sight and sound.

Fundraising initiatives included a bake sale, a silent auction and a 50/50 draw, with all funds raised going to the Milton District Hospital Foundation, where the money will aid in the purchase of surgical equipment, a portable ultrasound and other items on the hospital's annual priority list.

"I am very proud of our Canadian team members

who set aside so much of their valuable time and energy to give back to their local communities," Maria Soklis, Cox Automotive Canada president, said.

Across the country team members sorted food and stocked shelves at local food banks, made multiple meals for children and teens living at youth shelters, donated blood at local blood banks, volunteered at schools, helped to organize and run events in support of Canadian cancer charities and the Special Olympics and conquered fundraising for the Salvation Army.

You are invited to attend a Provincial ELECTION FORUM

Wednesday, May 23rd ~ 7:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.
Milton District High School, 396 Williams Ave., Milton

Take this opportunity to meet YOUR HALTON CANDIDATES!

- Indira Naidoo-Harris, **Liberal** • Parm Gill, **PC**
- Brendan Smyth, **NDP** • Eleanor Hayward, **Green Party**

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