

Judy Stueckler Bulcroft '78: the healing power of the honeybee



Judy Bulcroft '78 (left) with sister and business partner Sally

Bees have a reputation for being a frightening nuisance even to outdoor enthusiasts, but to Judy Stueckler Bulcroft, her sister Sally and brother-in-law Joel, over 1,000 buzzing creatures are the most important component of their business, Meadowlake Farm Beehive Skin Therapies. The organic lotions and creams they create from honey offer people, whose radiation therapy burns or diabetes-related wounds have not responded to other remedies, an alternative skin healing product.

Bulcroft and her partners, who run a 100-acre farm in Hiram, Ohio, have been collecting nice testimonials to promote their honey-based skin products. One customer comments, "I am so grateful to Meadowlake Farm and the bees and the beekeeper and the alchemical whiz who has created these wonderful God given products. As a practitioner, some of the most difficult conditions that I deal with are skin issues...eczema, psoriasis, acne, welts, fungus...and there is so little on the market that helps people in a topical way. Thank you for creating creams that work."

As an Ursuline nursing graduate, Bulcroft spent one year pursuing a degree at the former St. John College in downtown Cleveland and then followed the nursing school to its new home as part of Ursuline College. She has just retired after 30 years, in patient care, most recently in the rehabilitation of traumatic brain injuries. Bulcroft and her partners have been running Beehive Skin Therapies part-time but now that she is retired, Bulcroft plans to dedicate herself to the business.

Before she completes that transition, though, she will use her skills and the depth of her heart to see her father Carl through his end-of-life hospice experience. Bulcroft said, "I am grateful that I have the ability to take on a variety of different and demanding roles because of what Ursuline helped me learn about life. I left campus with a deeper intellectual and spiritual understanding and I got a stronger sense of my own identity there. Over the years I've seen my colleague's struggle who didn't have that kind of grounding,"

Bulcroft gives special thanks to Sr. Eileen Mary Collins, OSU, who was a light for the nursing student in English and philosophy, and to Ruby

Jackson, a nursing program mentor for Bulcroft. She observed, "There were so many teachers and staff members who were nurturing and gave me the self-confidence to take on all the different roles in my life including nurse, wife, mother and entrepreneur," said Bulcroft.

Ron Bulcroft is a central party in Judy's wife role. Nate, 21, and Kim, 17, are the recipients of her mothering. Her entrepreneur's hat is a more recent but welcome addition. She said she is excited about using her honey-based products to heal. "Honey is a natural anti-toxin, and it stops "free radicals". Honey truly is a powerful medicinal agent and it's a gift to be able to develop a business that you believe will be important in the healing process."

A green operation, Meadowlake uses raw, unprocessed hive products. "Our healing therapies are unmatched in their ability to repair damaged, unhealthy tissue and are used extensively by natural practitioners," said Bulcroft.

Bulcroft says the U.S. market has lagged a bit behind Taiwan, England, Canada and Japan in awakening to the magic of Meadowlake's extensive product line. She attributes that to the fact that, "The States have not accepted alternative medicine as enthusiastically as some other parts of the world, but that the interest is growing everyday." She will soon work to advance that process by harvesting herbs such as lemon balm, Echinacea and ladies mantle and blending them with Meadowlake's ointments and lotions.

In addition, Bulcroft sees herself as an educator, one committed to spreading the word about the efficacy of Meadowlake's ointments and creams and the urgent need to protect the struggling honey bees, which have been affected by the environmental degradation of the planet.

"It really is a good product line," says Bulcroft, "I feel blessed to have this mission after my rewarding career as a nurse."

