

# Sandusky River Valley Beekeepers Association



May 2021

srvba.ohiostatebeekeepers.org

## Upcoming Events

### **Monthly Meeting—Monday, May 3, 2021** **Virtual meeting using ZOOM**

- When: May 3, 2021 at 6:45pm Eastern Time (US and Canada)
- Please register in advance for the meeting. Members will receive an email for meeting registration.
- After registering for the meeting, you will receive a confirmation email containing information needed to join the meeting.
- Topic: Ohio Inspections and the Value of Mite Treatment Photo Courtesy of beehour.com
- Presenter: Barb Bloetscher, Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA)



## Message from the President

Hello SRVBA Members!

Welcome everyone to the May 2021 newsletter. I hope all your bees are healthy and strong. New packages are being distributed by the local vendors, the weather has been really good for the most part, fruit trees and dandelions are in full bloom, and what happens? We get 5 inches of snow, and 28 degrees cold night with highs of 70-80 degrees predicted for next week. Ohio weather, gotta love it!

We recently lost a great member of the club. Ralph Billow passed away. Ralph was active in our club and really enjoyed being a beekeeper and had a great passion for working with honey bees. Ralph will be missed. Our thoughts, prayers and condolences goes out to Ralph's family.



Join Sandusky River Valley Beekeepers Association:

1. Fill out membership form

<http://srvba.ohiostatebeekeepers.org/>

2. Mail form to: SRVBA, c/o  
Tami Wylie, 1000 CR 312,  
Bellevue, OH 44811

# Message from the President (continued)

For the past three weeks, the club has been active, teaching three different Beginner Beekeeping classes. This year we advertised, and offered the classes via our Facebook account and had 30 individuals interested and registered for the class. But with the Covid regulations, we decided to have three-8 hour classes with only 10 individuals in each class.

The classes were taught on three different Saturday's at Cherry City Honey Farms and Apiary (Gary and Tami Wylie's) new educational building Honey and Bee Equipment Market. Something different this year, we partnered with "Hives for Heroes," an organization that helps War Veterans with disabilities achieve new interests and hobbies. In the second class, we were able to meet two outstanding veterans and we were able to help them achieve their goals in learning and getting started with Beekeeping.

During the three different classes, we received some wonderful gifts to give-a-way as door prizes from the big name Beekeeping catalogue stores, OSBA, and SRVBA Club members. We are currently planning an in-person field day to show the Individuals the mechanics of a working hive, eggs, and maybe create some problems in some hives and show how to remedy the problem, in May or early June.

The classes that were offered cost each individual \$50.00, which included the class, all the handouts, one-year membership to SRVBA and OSBA, and a very generous box lunch from the Copper Top Bake Shop located in Bellevue.

A special thank you is in order to all who helped put these classes together. These members helped make up the PowerPoint for the class, purchased and donated door prizes for the classes, and helped set up and teach the three classes.

Dr. Mike Stone

Linda Miller

Gary and Tami Wylie

Kim Root

Angel Mitchell

Evelyn Lepard

Jackie Kindred

Chris Earnhardt

Our next meeting will again be via Zoom, on Monday May 3rd at 7:00 pm. Barb Bloetscher from the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) will be our guest speaker. Barb will speak on Ohio inspections and the value of mite treatment. Please try to attend.

# Message from the President (continued)

## IN THE HIVE

The month of May will be the start of swarm season. Like everyone says, when the dandelions start to bloom, swarm season is underway and it can start any day. Our own SRVBA member Linda Miller had a swarm last week, so please keep an eye on your bees. Make your splits and give the queen plenty of room for brood. I've heard a few beekeepers say that they have put honey supers on with queen excluders to give the bees more room. The reason for the swarm is that the queen runs out of room to lay eggs, so putting honey supers on with queen excluders isn't going to prevent swarms.

It's important to get a jump on swarm season to help prevent it. Check for swarm cells at the bottom of your frames and remember there is a difference between a queen cell and a queen cup.



**Tom Rathbun**  
**SRVBA President**

It is a natural thing for bees to make queen cups, and it's up to the queen if she wants to lay an egg in it to start a queen cell. Check the inside of the cups. If you see an egg or white royal jelly, the bees are in swarm mode. Do not cut swarm cells out when you find them.

Remember, it takes sixteen days for a queen to emerge and on day nine the cell is capped. Make splits by putting an empty brood box on top of your original box and put those frames with swarm queen cells in your splits. Give the Queen more room to lay her eggs, and check your yard often to catch clusters of bees that might have already swarmed. Swarms will only hang for a short period (a day or so). Once the scout bees find a new location they will convince the swarm to leave.

When I find a swarm in my yard, I sit and study the swarm, looking for the queen. The queen doesn't care for the sunlight, as I'm sure you've noticed watching a queen on a frame as she will always run on the underside of the frame. I study the shaded side of the swarm. I have a queen catcher clip ready. If I see the queen, I'll catch her and put her in the box, keeping her in the clip for a day or so. The bees won't leave the box if the queen can't leave.

I understand you can't always sit and study the swarm looking for the queen. Just make sure you catch the queen, or the bees won't stay in the box. Make sure you put drawn comb frames in your swarm box and give them honey frames for food. If you don't have any honey frames, remember to feed, feed, feed! Use sugar syrup at a 1 to 1 ratio. Make their lives as easy as possible so they want to stay in their new home.

May is an active month for our bees, so stay with them, inspect often, feed if the weather's going to be bad, and enjoy the bee yard.

Tom Rathbun

SRVBA President

# Ohio.....Contribution to Beekeeping

Written by: Linda Miller, Secretary SRVBA (Note: This article is being re-published this month, since the writing has gained notoriety in the beekeeper community. The article was recently published in the BEE CULTURE Magazine (May 2021 edition). Congratulation to Linda Miller for a job well-done!

## The Curious Life of Henry Quirin “Queen Breeder of the World”

Since beginning beekeeping I have heard stories about the Bellevue “bee man,” Henry Quirin. It was said that when he would be seen on the streets he was often mistaken for a transient and people would offer him a few coins for a meal. He would kindly thank them and move on. Henry was small in stature. He was usually dressed rather shabbily and only got one haircut a year, at the start of the bee season. Most people never realized he was one of the wealthiest men in the area.

Henry Quirin was born in Groton Township, Erie County, in 1872. He was the son of Nicholas and Barbara (Gross) Quirin, and one of six children. He was raised on a modest farm at the corner of State Route 4 and Strecker Road where his father owned about 40 acres of tillable land. This spot would later be known as Honey Corners. From humble beginnings, Henry began his bee business. At the time of his death in 1959 he had grown his estate to a value of near one million dollars.

When Henry was 10 years old, his father had become ill and developed a craving for honey. He would send young Henry to a neighbor to purchase the “amber fluid” to satisfy his father. After making frequent trips to retrieve the honey he became intensely interested in the science of honey bees. Henry is quoted as saying, “I remember I wanted to get a colony right away, as soon as I learned how they lived, but my father objected that I might get stung.”

Henry persisted however, and by the time he was 12 years old he took a gold dollar he had earned himself and purchased his first colony of honey bees.

Henry’s formal education never went beyond the fourth grade but he set out to learn all he could about the tiny workers. He got all the bee culture books he could find and soon taught himself every aspect of keeping bees. He discovered that the real problem was obtaining queens and soon started experimenting how to raise his own.

By 1891, when Henry was 19 years old, he discovered a novel way to commercially produce queens. Using an old chicken incubator, he was the first beekeeper to perfect a way to raise queens in such a way. “It is no easy matter to control 500 queens in one incubator, every one of whom is born a scrapper, so it is necessary to cage each one, as soon as hatched, in little wire bottles. In short time they are moved to roomier quarters, and after 10-12 days are ready to ship,” he later said.

Henry was very particular about choosing the queen he would graft from. They had to be prolific, gentle and splendid honey gatherers. Once he found the perfect queen, he said, “I would not sell her for \$200!”

# Ohio.....Contribution to Beekeeping

Written by: Linda Miller, Secretary SRVBA

## The Curious Life of Henry Quirin, “Queen Breeder of the World”

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He soon began placing ads in bee magazines and newspapers across the United States. Letters of inquiry began pouring in. He also became a favorite among commercial beekeepers because they could order queens in large quantities. At the peak of his enterprise he could produce as many as 1,500 queens a week.



Within a short period of time his queens became so well known for their excellence that he began shipping to far corners of the world including, but not exclusive to, New Zealand, Australia, Japan, China, West Indies and all across Europe. He soon became known as the “Queen Breeder of the World,” His specialty was Golden Italian and Leather Colored bees. In a good season, he expected to raise 5,000 queens.

During the winter months, Henry would busy himself making his shipping cages. The cages were fashioned in three inch wooden blocks with one open side covered with screen. For shipping he would place an adequate amount of food for the queen and about a dozen “escorts.” He could ship via postal service for eight cents per queen.

Over the years many tried to discover his secret to raising such an abundant amount of queens. Reporters would come to his apiary hoping to discover his method but would usually end up being free labor for the day. When asked how many employees he had he would simply reply, “50,000,000.” He rarely hired help because he couldn’t find anyone that would share his passion for the honey bee.

In 1906, he owned 15 or more farms where he kept his apiaries. They were mostly located in Erie, Huron and Sandusky counties. By that time his “secret” had been discovered and competition increased. When profits decreased he gradually turned his main focus to honey and comb honey production, still managing 450 colonies.

# Ohio.....Contribution to Beekeeping

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## The Curious Life of Henry Quirin,

“Queen Breeder of the World”

### Page 3

Henry may have had only a fourth grade formal education but made his way in the world quite well. He invested wisely in stocks, securities, and property. In 1925, he purchased the Woodward-Ellis Mansion at 400 Southwest Street in Bellevue, Ohio where he lived until his death in 1959.

Henry was once quoted as saying, “Bees are smarter than most people. They don’t have any divorces, any wars, or any depressions.” I tend to agree. He was known about town as eccentric, a bit of a recluse, preferring the company of his bees over people. I have days like that, too. I find comfort in watching the bees go about their work with purpose and joy, the gentle hum of the bee yard drowning out the static of the outside world, and creating its own bubble of peace with nature.



## QUIRIN The Queen BREEDER

Has a strain of Italian bees in which prolificness and honey-gathering are developed to a high degree. His location furnishes a continuous honey-flow throughout the season, while the broad, extended prairie surrounding his yard allows of no undesirable drones in bee-trees. He expects to keep on hand from 600 to 1,200 queens, and be able to fill orders by return mail, guaranteeing safe arrival, at the following prices ;—

	Before July			After July 1st		
	One	Six	Twelve	One	Six	Twelve
Select.....	\$1.00	\$5.00	\$9.00	.75	\$4.00	\$7.00
Tested.....	1.50	8.00	1.00	1.00	5.00	9.00
Select Tested.....	2.00	10.00	18.00	1.50	8.00	15.00
Breeders.....	4.00			3.00	15.00	
Straight five-banded breeders	6.00			5.00		
Two-frame Nucleus, no queen,	2.50	14.00	25.00	2.25	12.00	22.00
Full colony, on eight frames,	6.00	30.00		4.00	22.00	

Send for Circular giving many particulars that lack of space forbids mention here. **FOLDING CARTONS** at only \$4.00 M, so long as present stock lasts.

**QUIRIN-THE-QUEEN-BREEDER, Bellevue, Ohio**

# In Remembrance

## Ralph Edwin Billow

**1929 - 2021**

Fremont - Ralph Edwin Billow, 91, of Fremont, OH went to be with the Lord on Saturday, April 10, 2021 with his wife of seventy-two years at his side.

Ralph was born on September 9, 1929 in Fayette, OH to William and Allie (Cotton) Billow. As a child his family relocated to the Fremont area and after attending several area schools he graduated in 1948 from Jackson Burgoon High School. He married Juanita Linton on January 16, 1949 at the Fremont Nazarene Church.

Over the years he was associated with: the Sandusky County Ham Radio Club, Sandusky County Historical Society, the Sandusky River Valley Beekeepers Association, the Sandusky County Beautification Commission, Hayes Presidential Center, a Life member of the Ohio Historical Society, a Life member of the NRA, Ohio Historical Canoe Route Association (canoeing across Ohio five times), the Building and Grounds Advisory Committee at the Hayes Presidential Center and for many years a member of the Board of Trustees of the Fremont Church of the Nazarene. In 1993 the Fremont Chamber of Commerce honored Ralph by presenting him with the Distinguished Service Award for that year.

For many years Ralph and his wife were familiar faces at area festivals where they made open-kettle apple butter. The sale of their apple butter enabled them to finance an extended vacation to Australia to visit Junita's longtime penpal. Among his many travels was a memorable Alaskan trip Ralph and two friends took in 1973. They started from Fremont and drove the entire length of Alaska in a converted van (in which they slept) eating only one meal in a restaurant the entire trip.

He began his forty-three-year long career with the Hayes Presidential Center right out of high school as a chauffeur for Admiral Hayes (the grandson of President Rutherford B. Hayes) in 1949. He eventually began working with the grounds superintendent as a gardener (his lifelong passion) and in 1958 he was promoted to his position as Superintendent of Grounds and Maintenance until his retirement in 1992. In recognition of his forty-three years of faithful service and love for trees, the Hayes Presidential Center honored Ralph at an American Chestnut tree planting ceremony at Spiegel Grove in May of 2017 to reintroduce the species back to the Grove that President Hayes had begun in 1873.



# In Remembrance (continued)

## Ralph Edwin Billow

**1929 - 2021**

After his retirement, Ralph and Juanita became faithful volunteers with Mobil Meals at Fremont Memorial Hospital for ten years.

Ralph is survived by his wife Juanita; sons, Ronald (Margaret), Dennis (Susan), Steve (Deborah), and son-in-law, James Collum; grandchildren, Mathew (Heather), Vaughn, Alison (Nate) Hyde, Timothy (Hailey), Stacy (Ian) West, Stephanie Billow, Lisa Foreman, Brendan and Zachary Collum; great grandchildren, Jackson and Piper Billow, Audrey, Lily, and Claire West.

He was preceded in death by his parents; sisters, Ruth Hawkins and Mary Suffecool; brothers, Clair and Wayne Billow and daughter, Elaine Collum.

In memory of Ralph, donations may be made to the Fremont Nazarene Church, Hayes Presidential Center, the Sandusky County Historical Society or Heartland Hospice.

Visitation will take place on Thursday (April 15, 2021) from 2 to 4 p.m. and 6 to 8 p.m. at the Fremont Church of the Nazarene, 1925 N Fifth St., Fremont, OH 43420.

Service will be Friday, April 16, 2021 beginning at 12:30 p.m. at the church with an hour of visitation prior with Pastor Dan Vickey officiating.

The use of face masks is highly recommended while indoors. If you would prefer, you may express your condolences at [www.whhfh.com](http://www.whhfh.com) or call Wonderly Horvath Hanes Funeral Home and Crematory at 419-332-6409 to request that your name be signed in the guest book.

Burial will take place at Oakwood Cemetery.

To Plant Memorial Trees in memory, please visit our [Sympathy Store](#).

Published in News-Messenger from Apr. 10 to Apr. 12, 2021.

# Classifieds

## Packages, Queens & Nucs – Tom Rathbun/Southridge Apiary

Package (3 lb) Honey Bees for Sale      **\$119.00**

Extra Queens (each)      **\$32.00**

Please place order at [www.olddrone.net](http://www.olddrone.net)

Select the desired date for pickup, and Tom Rathbun's house (Clyde Ohio) for pick-up.

Nucs (5-frame) for Sale      **\$170.00**

Contact Tom Rathbun at 419 603-1749 to order.

Pickup only.



## Cherry City Honey Farms & Apiary – Tami & Gary Wylie

### Bee Supplies and Equipment

Cherry City Honey stocks and sells new bee hive equipment. Due to our location in the Clyde-Bellevue area, it's approximately a one hour drive to the nearest bee equipment supply store. This drive is inconvenient, time consuming and expensive.

Also, online orders from distant suppliers often require purchase of larger quantities to obtain fair pricing and shipping/freight rates for new equipment are expensive.

We stock bee equipment you'll most likely need. Our bee hive boxes and equipment is of the highest quality and comes already assembled and ready for you to paint before use. The equipment is available for pick-up only.

We don't ship because the high shipping rates makes new bee equipment unreasonably costly. We can arrange for local delivery in the Bellevue-Clyde area. We accept cash or credit cards for payment.

Please consider us for your bee hive equipment needs. [2021 Price List](#)

# Classifieds

Chris Carroll  
419-541-7410  
**\*\*SELLING\*\***

- Hive with a 10 frame brood box with lid and bottom board or pallet.
- Bees and laying queen included.
- 8 drawn frames
- internal hive feeder.
- Asking \$165.00 each.
- Available mid April-May1st, weather pending.
- Limited supply, taking orders now!



For Sale

Uncapping Tank—\$40.00

Contact Sue Rhodes 419-619-5019



For Sale

Electric Plane Decapper—\$50.00

The electric uncapping plane heats up quickly, and works even speedier to remove wax cappings from your honey frames. Almost new.

Contact Sue Rhodes 419-619-5019