

# THE BEE SPACE



Will County  
Beekeepers  
Association  
Est. 2011

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## PLEASE JOIN US FOR NEXT MEETING:

**May 17, 2023 at 7 pm**  
Will County Farm Bureau  
100 Manhattan Rd  
Joliet, IL 60433

## FEATURED TOPICS:

- Small scale queen rearing
- No winter losses
- Marking queen practice session
- July picnic details

## THIS MONTH IN YOUR HIVES

### MAY / JUNE

- Continue feeding bee package installs until they no longer take sugar water
- Check for mites and treat before putting on supers
- Set-up swarm traps
- Add additional supers when 80% of the frames are full
- Monitor strong hives closely for swarming traits such as swarm cells
- Check brood pattern to determine if the queen is healthy
- Supply a water source heading into summer to help the bees cool their hives in the heat
- Consider performing splits to expand your apiary and to avoid swarming

## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE HIVE

Additional information regarding hives management for May and June was kindly provided by John Leibinger. Click to download.

[Chores of the Month – May](#)

[Chores of the Month – June](#)

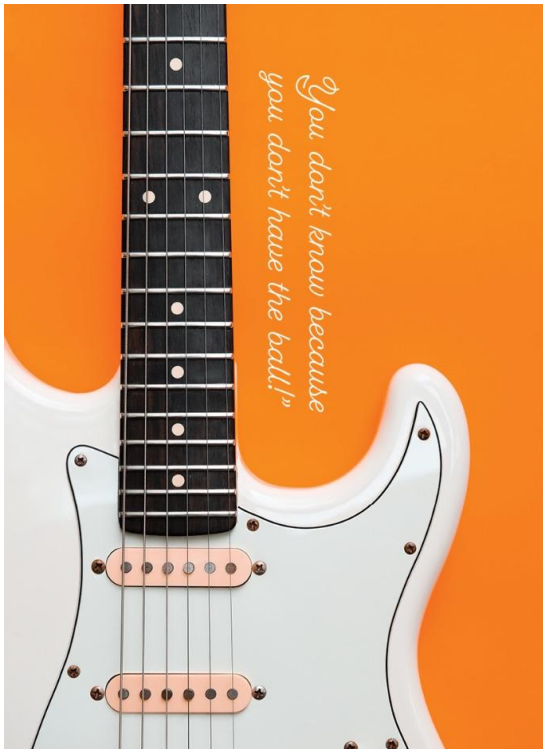


## SPECIAL MAY MEETING RAFFLE – WIN A HONEY SUPER!

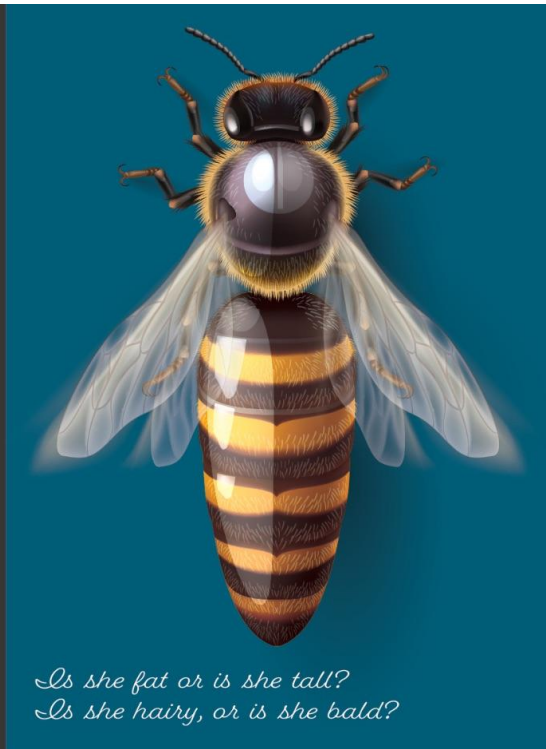
Just in time for the upcoming nectar flow, Willbees is raffling a 10 frame honey super with frames and foundation for only \$5 per entry. Tickets will be offered at the May meeting and pulled at the conclusion of evening.

*Must be present to win!*





*"Queenie, Queenie,  
who's got the ball?"*



BY PATRICK SCHAB

## Queenie and Queens

*I was driving home the other day thinking about queens, and a Paul McCartney song called "[Queenie Eye](#)" came on. It's a pretty catchy toon and it got me wondering if Paul is a beekeeper?*

Wouldn't that be cool, a Beatle having bees? My curiosity got the best of me, so I did a little digging. As it turns out, the song is based on a game that Sir Paul played as a child called *Queenie, Queenie, Who's Got the Ball*.

It's a rather simple game that's played with a ball by four or more players. A girl is picked to be "Queenie," and she turns her back on everyone else. "Queenie" then throws the ball over her shoulder and one of the other players needs to catch it or pick it up. Everyone, except "Queenie", puts their hands behind their backs so that "Queenie" does not know who has the ball.

The fun part begins when "Queenie" turns around while the others shout,

*Queenie, Queenie, who's got the ball?*

*Is she fat or is she tall?*

*Is she hairy, or is she bald?*

*You don't know because you don't have the ball!*

This second half of the chant sounds like how we describe our honey bee queens, doesn't it? Who doesn't want a nice plump queen!

The game continues with "Queenie" guessing who has the ball through a process of elimination.

So it really comes down to a game of chance and being able to read the audience. This is how I feel when I'm inspecting my hives. It's a game of trying to find the queen. I watch closely at the other bees for clues, like if the workers are clustered-up in a group, which could mean they are clustered around her. Spotting fresh eggs on a particular frame could mean you're hot on her trail as well.


As you get to know your bees, you'll get to know your queen even if you don't see her. How so? Well, your brood pattern says a lot about your queen's status. A solid brood pattern with few empty cells is a good sign that all is well.


On the other hand, a spotty brood pattern is a warning sign that something isn't quite right. This could mean your queen is failing or stressed. Is your mite load causing your colony to struggle? Is she old? It may be time to replace her, especially if she is 2 plus years old.



Depending on your situation, it may be time to explore a new queen. Perhaps you want a queen that is more mite resistant, or a queen that tolerates winters better, or one that produces a lot of honey. Lucky for you, there are plenty of options to consider.

I reached out to master beekeeper, Jim Lindau to help create this mini guide to queens:

 <b>Common Queens Traits</b>	<i>Italians</i> Gentle and have a high fecundity which means they spend their energy in the production of many offspring.	<i>Africanized</i> Very defensive and swarm often. Yipes and double yipes!
	<i>Russians</i> Defensive, slow starters in the spring and swarm often. However, they are more than twice as resistant to varroa mites than other honey bees and also tend to produce as much honey as standard bee stocks, if not more.	<i>Carniolans</i> Good honey producers. Forage on cold, wet days. Rank high for overwintering. Explosive spring buildup and their tendency to swarm.



Just because you bought a particular breed of queen, Jim warns that it won't stay that way. "Queens open breed from drones that come from multiple colonies. No matter what "race" you buy, after one generation it will be a local hybrid."

So, where does this leave us? To be a master of playing the simple game of "Queenie, Queenie, Who's Got the Ball," you need to listen to Paul's song to learn the lyrics and then "read" the players to determine who's hiding the ball. To be a *master* of understanding your honey bee queen, you need to determine if she is a lackluster performer, or on the top of her game by "reading" your hive's frames. From there, you can decide if a new queen is needed or if your in good shape for the season.

**BEECABULARY**

***Time to expand your bee vocabulary.***  
*Bring your answers to our next meeting to earn a tasty treat which will surely impress your fellow beekeepers!*

*Worker comb*  
*Slatted rack*  
*Royal jelly*

*Nosema*  
*Laying worker*  
*Fume board*







BY SUSAN GREGORY

## Building a Meadow for Pollinators

*Join me as I build a “meadow” for the pollinators who visit my yard.*

This is not a difficult project and you do not need a great deal of space, even as small as 3 square feet!

This is the beginning of my project. I secured a metal twin sized bed frame and painted it green. I plan to put a border around it, add topsoil and plant a wildflower seed mix.

How about some other suggestions? Please see [this link](#) to *Growing a Greener World, Creating a Meadow Garden; Anywhere Around Your Yard*, Episode 1011, Hosted by Joe Lamp'l.

In this episode, Joe explains the benefits of a meadow, how to attract pollinators, selecting a site, what seeds to plant, and the benefits!

Seeds are available at many stores OR you may visit this helpful [link](#) for American Meadows. American Meadows specializes in seeds for meadows.

I invite you to join me in creating a Meadow Garden on your property, if possible, to support your honeybees as well as other pollinators. Please let me know how your project progresses. If everything goes well for me, I hope to share pictures in a few months!



SAVE THE DATE:

## Summer Picnic



Beer, Burgers, Bingo and Bees, What Could Be Better?

We are pleased to announce the WillBees picnic is returning for members and family members. Meyer Bees of Minooka, IL has kindly offered to host the event.

**Please mark your calendars for July 22, 1 to 5pm.**

*Details to come. Note, there will not be a July member meeting.*





*This month's recipe was submitted by member Georgia Karras and provided from [www.olivetomato.com](http://www.olivetomato.com).*

## **Pasteli: Greek Honey-Sesame Bars**

### **Provided**

7 ounces about 1 ½ cup sesame seeds

7 ounces about ½ cup plus 1 tablespoon honey

### **Step 1**

Toast the sesame seeds. You can spread them in a pan and put them in the oven at 325 degrees fahrenheit or you can toast them in a pan. You want them to get a bit of color but not too brown.

### **Step 2**

Pour the honey in a medium saucepan and heat the honey until it starts to bubble. Let it boil for 4-5 minutes. If you have a food thermometer, boil until the honey reaches a temperature of 250 F (125 C).

### **Step 3**

Pour the toasted sesame seeds, lower the heat and stir. Making sure all ingredients are mixed well together. Heat the mixture for 2-3 minutes more (the more it cooks the crunchier it will be-but be careful of scorching). To check if it is ready, take a small amount and drop it in a glass with water, it should stay in a ball, if it spreads out it still needs to be heated.

### **Step 4**

Line a pan with slightly greased (I spray or brush with olive oil) parchment paper and pour the sesame mixture, place another sheet of parchment paper on top (also greased) and spread out the sesame-honey mix with a rolling pin. I prefer to do this step directly on the table instead of using a pan, that way I can spread as thin as I like (mine are rolled out to ¼ inch thick).

### **Step 5**

Remove the top sheet carefully and let it cool for about 15 minutes. Cut in small bars. Let them cool completely. Remove and store with parchment paper between them in an airtight container.

## *Mark your calendars*

DON'T MISS OUT ON UPCOMING WILLBEES MEETING GUEST TOPICS!

*May*  
**Small Scale  
Queen Rearing**  
WITH JIM LINDAU

*June*  
**Robbing  
Behaviors**  
WITH DR JIM TEW

*May*  
**How My Bees  
Overwintered**  
WITH DAVE MUSGRAVE

*July*  
**Summer  
Fun  
Picnic!**





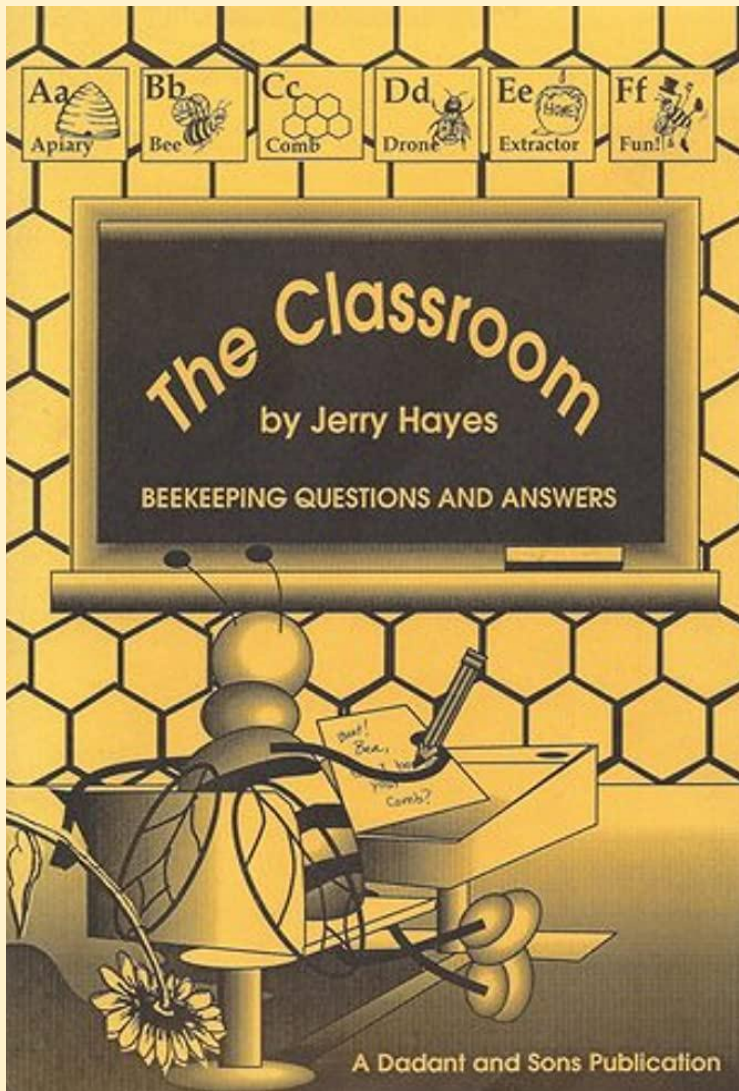
# BOOK NOOK

## The Classroom, Beekeeping Questions and Answers

*By Jerry Hayes, 1998 Dadant & Sons*

*Reviewed by Dennis E. Wisnosky*

Mr. Hayes began answering questions in the "American Bee Journal" in 1978. This book is a compilation of questions and his answers from 1993 to 1998 with some from his earlier files. That the book is dated by 25 years should not give one pause. Other than talking to Dave Meyer and James Konrad, the most that I have learned about Beekeeping was from a book published in 1908, "A Year's Work in An Out-Apiary". Subtitled, "An average of 114 1/2 pounds of honey per colony in a poor season, and how it was done." Google it and it can be read online. The Model T Ford story in the book is also interesting.



This book has 18 chapters. Each chapter is questions about a single topic such as Queens – Chapter 1. Moving Bees – Chapter 5. Pollen and Pollination – Chapter 17. The table of contents provides some detail about the material in each chapter, but there is no index. Each chapter is focused on specific related questions and answers. However, hundreds of questions and answers over years combined with the fact that there is really seldom a single answer to any question causes the reader to want to go back to another chapter to better understand a particular answer. For example, Chapter 10 – Comb Honey may clarify Chapter 6 – Equipment, where equipment for Comb Honey was mentioned. After a couple of such searches, one just gives up. Where and why did he say to arrange hives in a circle? I occasionally started reading the book after cocktail hour, so I may have misremembered that one.

With time on a Winter evening, the book is worth perusing. Each chapter does have some useful, if not only interesting, information in response to questions from all over the globe. In Chapter 12 – Stings and Venom, I learned that Bee venom is most potent when the girl is 18 days old and that the venom weighs about 0.1mg. That is about .1% of her body weight. The answers that he gives about possible effects of stings do not match my experience. Immunity over time for example.

As per usual in this Beekeeping hobby or business of ours, we hear many answers to any given question. If you want an answer that you like to one of your questions, you will likely find it in this book. The only dated answers may be in Chapter – 14, Parasitic Mites and Treatments. In the last 25 years there have been many new theories and treatments. Though no one still knows what really works and why. Mainly there has only been more Government money spent on research, and better photography.

*Our Will Bees lending library offers a vast selection of books and videos for you to enjoy. Be sure to check out a book at our next member meeting.*

## *Physics, Bees and Fishing*

THIS MONTH'S BEE ADVOCATE  
IS MASTER BEEKEEPER,  
DR. JAMES TEW

Dr. James E. Tew is an Emeritus Faculty member at The Ohio State University. Jim is also retired from the Alabama Cooperative Extension System. During his forty-eight years of bee work, Jim has taught classes, provided extension services, and conducted research on honey bees and honey bee behavior.

Jim is the co-host of the weekly podcast Honeybee Obscura. He contributes monthly articles to national beekeeping publications and has written: *Beekeeping Principles, Wisdom for Beekeepers, The Beekeeper's Problem Solver, and Backyard Beekeeping*. He has a chapter in *The Hive and the Honey Bee* and was a co-author of *ABC and XYZ of Bee Culture*.



**We are excited to have Jim as our guest speaker at our June 21 member meeting when he will speak about robbing behavior of honey bees.**

*We love to feature you within BeeSpace! Please send us a photo and a couple paragraphs about you and beekeeping.*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **ATTENTION: WILLBEES NEEDS YOU!**

The Will County Beekeepers Association is working to spread the news about honey bees at several community events, and we need your help. We are looking for several volunteer members to join us at the events to share what you know! We are also looking for another member to join the awareness committee to help coordinate our events.

Please mark your calendar for the events listed below. These events are family friendly, so bring the entire family. Bring your bee suit, veil, tools, and your knowledge, to speak with community members about honeybees. There will not be any sales of products, but simply, a knowledge share.

Visit our booth at the following events:



### **Bluestem Earth Festival**

**Saturday, May 20, 2023**

The event will take place at Bronkberry Farm, 18061 South Bronk Road, Plainfield.

[Click for more information](#)

### **Will County Fair**

**Wednesday – Sunday, August 23-27, 2023**

The Fair is located in Peotone, IL, just east of Route 57. The event will run in conjunction with the Will County Farm Bureau. [Click for more information](#)

*There will be more information available about these events. Please sign up to help wherever you can. For more information or questions, contact Sue Gregory, WillBees Treasurer at [susangregory418@gmail.com](mailto:susangregory418@gmail.com)*



### **WillBees Field Days: Slovenian Hive Tour**

**Saturday, June 10, 2023 at 2 – 4pm**

You can take a trip to Slovenia, or save cash on travel and join Dennis Wisnosky in Plainfield as we get up close and personal to view his own Slovenian Bee hive known as AZ hives. Please register at our next meeting. *Note: All attendees are required to sign a waiver and wear protective gear.*

## **ON-GOING ED**

**The SouthWestern Ohio Beekeepers Association SWOBA is pleased to be offering the following free lectures.**

**Wed, May 24 (6:30 PM - 07:30 PM)**

[Mr. Chris Hiatt Meeting](#)

**Sunday, June 25 (6:30 PM - 07:30 PM)**

[Mr. Jerry Hayse Meeting](#)

**Sunday, July 23 (6:30 PM - 07:30 PM)**

[Mrs. Rebecca Melton Masterman Ph.D.](#)

**Sunday, August 27 (6:30 PM - 07:30 PM)**

[Mr. Jim Masucci](#)

**Sunday, September 24 (6:30 PM - 07:30 PM)**

[Mr. Dewey Caron. Ph.D.](#)

**Wednesday, October 25 (6:30 PM - 07:30 PM)**

[Mrs. Michelle Flenniken, Ph.D.](#)

### **Illinois State Beekeepers Association's 2023 Summer Conference**

**July 14 –15, 2023, Quincy, Illinois**

ISBA has a wonderful line-up of speakers including Kamon Reynolds, Randy McCaffrey, Adam Dolezal, Natalee Summers, Cory Stevens, Jeff Horchoff and Elsa Gallagher

[Click here for details](#)

### **Breakfast with the Bees hosted by James Konrad**

The Fox Valley Beekeepers Association extends an open invitation to all beekeepers to join them via Zoom for a group chat every Saturday at 7:30am Central Time. Guests are encouraged to ask questions and contribute to various topics that relate to the season. Please email James at

[james@jamesgardenbees.com](mailto:james@jamesgardenbees.com) for more information.



## Interesting Reads:

*New research finds surprising science behind bumble bee superfood* – [Click here](#)

*What does it mean when someone's at their 'Beekeeping Age'?* – [Click here](#)

Can insects have culture? Puzzle-solving bumblebees show it's possible – [Click here](#)

## Worth the Watch:

*My Hive Mind* – [Click here](#)

Katharine O'Brien, a Hastings UK based beekeeper, loves the bees and finds great comfort in nurturing them in a less interventionist way as a way of connecting with nature.

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# ODDS & ENDS

## ***The Golden Spoon Award***

As we get set for the upcoming year, keep your sights towards the end of the season to enter the Prestigious Golden Spoon Award honey competition, held in our member appreciation meeting in November. See our past winner on our brand new award plaque as you enter our member meetings.

## ***Meyer Bees Bee Packages***

3 pound bee packages with a queen are available starting at \$130 through Meyer Bees. Multiple races are available: Italian, Carnoliain, Russian, Saskatraz. Nuc and queens are also available. The Meyer Bees beekeeping supply showroom in Minooka is open 6 days a week, Monday through Saturday. For details please contact WillBees member Dave Meyer: [dave@meyerbees.com](mailto:dave@meyerbees.com), or 815-521-9116 or visit their website at [meyerbees.com](http://meyerbees.com)

***Don't forget to register your hives for free with the Illinois Department of Agriculture.***

<https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/agr/Insects/Bees/Documents/beekeep.pdf>

## ***Swap Meet***

Let's all start going through our existing equipment and think about donating it to new beekeepers. Items may be things you originally may have used and replaced or have more than you need. At a future meeting we will all bring these items and raffle things off. More details in the future. We could use a captain for this project. Please reach out to the board if you can help.

## ***Share what you know***

We are looking for people to help contribute to your monthly newsletter:

- Feature articles that you'd like to write
- Review of a book or article in a journal you read
- An educational opportunity that you are aware of
- Pictures that you'd like us to share

Please email [willbees-board@willbees.org](mailto:willbees-board@willbees.org) with anything you'd like to share today.

## **Update your calendar for our upcoming WillBees meetings:**

Wednesdays at 7pm:

May 17, Jun 21, Aug 16, Sep 20, Oct 18, Nov 15

## **BOARD MEMBERS**

Patrick Schab, President

Dennis Wisnosky, Vice President

Susan Gregory, Treasurer

Fran Miller, Secretary

**DIRECTORS** (years remaining on term):

Keith Meiser (3)

Dave Meyer (1)

Jim Moleski (2)