

OCBA Up to the Minutes News

Volume 1, No. 7

TheOCBA.org

July 2018

OCBA GROUP DINNER

Come and join the discussion

19 members gathered at Radius Pizzeria for the July pre-meeting dinner. Those in attendance discussed the upcoming NCSBA Conference, this summer's honey harvest and the seemingly high number of queen events experienced by members this year.

All members are invited to attend this group dinner prior to each monthly meeting. It is a great opportunity to get to know each other and to share all things bee related. The group meets at 5:00.

2ND ANNUAL ASK THE EXPERTS ROUNDTABLE

Back by popular demand, OCBA hosted an Ask the Experts roundtable for a second year. This may become an annual event as it affords beekeepers of all skill levels an opportunity to pick the brains and benefit from the beekeeping expertise of more seasoned beekeepers. 54 OCBA members attended the meeting. Our panel of OCBA experts this year included **Walter Starks** and **Randall Austin**. They were joined by **Will Hicks**, NC State Apiary Inspector for the upper Piedmont region.

Although it's important to keep up to date with the latest in honey bee husbandry by reading books, periodicals, and research papers, the practical knowledge of experienced beekeepers is invaluable. Those present at the meeting shared their concerns, asked for guidance, and posed pointed questions to the panel. The very first question dealt with concerns about nosema and its treatment. Fumagillin, the only treatment available, has recently been discontinued because the raw materials are no longer available to the producer. The panel noted that a severe nosema infection is not only uncommon it may be difficult to diagnose. Treatment with fumagillin may have done more harm than good in some cases.

Another popular topic for discussion was hive robbing during the summer dearth and ways to deal with it. Other topics of interest included: how to get swarms to stay in the hive; how to lower the moisture content in honey in the comb; the importance of reading the label on treatments for varroa; and the pros and cons of using plastic foundation. It was a fun meeting with lots of humor, discovery, reassurance, and education.

NCSBA CONFERENCE – WELL ATTENDED

25 members of OCBA attended NCSBA's Summer Conference at Blue Ridge Community College in Flat Rock. Dr. Thomas Seeley of Cornell University, the featured speaker, led 5 different educational sessions explaining his historic work and his current research with honey bees. Several members prevailed upon Dr. Seeley to autograph his most important books to date, "*Honey Bee Democracy*" and "*The Wisdom of the Hive*."

At the conference, two OCBA members received awards for their beekeeping related entries. **Dawn Rogers** won 1st place for her gift basket of beeswax items entry. The basket included lip balm, hand lotion, and foot cream. Dawn also won 2nd place for her extracted light honey entry.

Mark Powers won 2nd place for his chunk honey entry and 3rd place for his cut comb honey entry. Mark talked with the judges after the event to learn how to improve his scores with future entries and vowed, "I'll be back!"

Now that Mark and Dawn have shown us how to do it every OCBA member should plan to enter an exhibit in the State Fair. Prepare your entries now!

OCBA'S NEWEST MASTER BEEKEEPERS

Congratulations to Chris and Cynthia!



Master Beekeepers Chris Apple and Cynthia Speed are congratulated by Paul Newbold, Chair of the NCSBA Master Beekeeper Program

Cynthia Speed and **Chris Apple**, joined 11 other North Carolina beekeepers who earned Master Beekeeper certification at an award ceremony at the NCSBA Summer Conference. Cynthia and Chris, who shared Co-President responsibilities for OCBA during 2014 and 2015, progressed through the beekeeping ranks to achieve this prestigious recognition of their in-depth knowledge of bees and their exemplary skills as beekeepers.

Master Beekeeper certification requires beekeepers to demonstrate an in-depth knowledge of honey bee biology and the diseases and parasites encountered in beekeeping. Master Beekeepers must meet community education and engagement requirements and are required to volunteer in some capacity at a state meeting or conference.

OCBA is now home to over 200 beekeepers including 7 Master Beekeepers, 8 Journeyman Beekeepers and 24 Certified Beekeepers.

NCSBA BEE BOWL

Last minute effort equals fun for all!

Mark Powers, Karen Lauterbach and OCBA's 2018 Apprentice, **Megan Talikoff** comprised an impromptu Bee Bowl Team at the NCSBA Summer Conference. Megan pulled the team together at the last minute to help NCSBA organizers fill out their competition brackets. Mark and Karen report that Megan's enthusiasm and "we can do this" attitude was contagious as she convinced them to get on board.

Karen noted that the experience will help OCBA better prepare for future Bee Bowl competitions. "We learned strategy. Give a numerical range for an answer, not just one number. We learned about the competition. It is stiff. It included a PhD entomologist at NCSU and multiple Master Beekeepers who have practiced Bee Bowls throughout the year."

Notwithstanding the fact that our team did not bring home the gold, OCBA's team was an awe-inspiring contender. No other Bee Bowl Team brought an equal range of experience diversity to the Bee Bowl – an apprentice (Megan), a Certified Beekeeper (Karen), and a Journeyman Beekeeper (Mark). Great work, great spirit, great fun!

POLLINATOR GARDEN

By Karen Lauterbach



OCBA members **Geneva Green** and **Lucy Wilson** created OCBA's Pollinator Garden at the Alexander Dickson House in Hillsborough. The Dickson House, home to Hillsborough's Visitors Center, provides a high visibility location for the Pollinator Garden. **Karen Lauterbach** now coordinates volunteers for the garden. She is grateful to Geneva and Lucy for creating a pollinator garden that is easy to maintain, even during the extended periods of drought we've had this summer. The purple coneflower, beebalm, catmint, salvia, mountain mint, and tiger lilies were excellent choices for the garden. The garden has looked good all summer.

Karen is also grateful for the OCBA volunteers who have helped with garden maintenance this year. Lucy Wilson tidied up the garden in early spring before turning it over to Karen. Since then, **Jeanne Arnts, Marieke Pieterman** and **John Dorman** have helped with the mulching, weeding, and cutting back of some of the perennials.

The garden is located at 150 E. King St. in Hillsborough. Stop by and check it out if you get a chance. Contact [Karen](#) if you are interested in volunteering to help maintain the garden.

GOLDEN ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM (GAP)

PROGRESS

At the July meeting **Cynthia Speed** said that she was pleased that OCBA club members are turning out to participate in bee themed events and in community outreach activities. She urged members to continue the good work and to document their efforts for the Golden Achievement Award Program. She has high hopes that under the leadership of **Rob Jewett**, State Fair Coordinator, OCBA will continue to accumulate points with a grand fair display and many, many entries in competitive categories. Please send any ideas for a unique display to Rob at: historyguy.learn@gmail.com.

NEW TOOL FOR HONEY PRODUCTION

Let OCBA test your honey's moisture content



OCBA recently acquired a refractometer to help members test the moisture content of their extracted honey. **Brad Kosiba**, who is responsible

for maintaining and renting out the club's honey extraction equipment will test the moisture content of honey samples brought to OCBA's monthly meetings for testing. If you are interested in knowing the moisture content of your honey bring a sample to the August meeting. Remember: honey with a moisture content higher than 18.6% may ferment and will be disqualified from the State Fair honey competition.

OUTREACH

By Cynthia Speed

Granville County Bee Jubilee

The 3rd Annual Granville County Beekeepers Bee Jubilee was held in Oxford on Saturday, June 23, 2018. OCBA was there in force to help educate the non-beekeeping public with demonstrations, workshops and speakers. There were information tables with bee-themed arts & crafts, bee products and supplies, produce, plants, food trucks, kid's activities and a silent auction.

Chris Apple, Cynthia Speed, Geneva Green, Karen Lauterbach, Dawn Rogers, and Elizabeth Strong represented OCBA at a booth that offered make-and-take lip balm and sting salve. Not only did we have a great time, we cleared \$83.00 to donate to NC State apiary research! Children and adults paid for a recipe and proceeded to mix pure beeswax with other secret ingredients known only to the customer on a hot plate to create their own lip balm and/or sting salve to take home. The event was so successful that OCBA's team is already talking about what can be done to improve OCBA's next Bee Jubilee event!



Dawn Rogers and Julian Strong making lip balm at Granville County's 2018 Bee Jubilee

DISCLAIMER: OCBA is simply serving as a central site for the listing of Bee2Bee Library books. OCBA is not responsible for lending arrangements between lenders and borrowers nor for books that may be damaged or go permanently missing.

NEW BEES FOR OCBA

As you may recall Bailey Bee Supply offered to provide OCBA with one package of bees for each 75 packages purchased by OCBA members. This month OCBA took delivery of 2 nucs from Bailey Bee Supply. One nuc will be placed at Blackwood Farm Park to be available to supplement the top bar and Langstroth hives there if needed. The other nuc will be used to repopulate Hive #1 at Carrboro High School. Hive #1 failed to produce a new queen after a recent queen event. The resulting laying worker colony was combined with Hive #2. OCBA thanks **David Bailey** of Bailey Bee Supply for his continued generous support of OCBA and its members.

BOOKS FOR BEEKS

By Stephen Rintoul

The Queen Must Die and Other Affairs of Bees and Men by William Longgood

Before reading this book, I thought bees were cool, and I liked the taste of honey. I knew about queens and workers and bee dances, I knew about swarming and I knew how a beehive is constructed. I'm not a beekeeper, but my dad is, and I have enough curiosity that I've picked up some of the basics.

Mr. Longgood's quiet little 30-year-old book, though, is a kind of meditation on beeness: an exploration of the motivations, desires, and attitudes of the simple honeybee as she goes about her business. The questions he raises range from the unknowable (do drones know that successful copulation will mean their death?) to things that science may eventually give us the answers to (how does a colony decide when to swarm?), but each is considered so thoughtfully and with such genuine affection for the bees that you are infected.

He examines the contrasts between honeybee and human societies, marvels at the completeness of nature's design where the bee is concerned, and writes with gripping drama about the most exciting moments in the hive, which typically pass unheeded by beekeepers (with the exception of swarming, which is rarely missed).

A fine piece of literature, which I recommend highly whether you are interested in bees or not.

If you've read an interesting, funny, serious, or ludicrous bee book lately share your review with the rest of OCBA. Send your summary via email with Books for Beeks in the subject line.]

OCBA DOOR PRIZES FOR JULY

Door prizes at this month's meeting were: a dozen Muth jars donated by Anne Cabell, an electric uncapping knife donated by Cedric Pearce, and a pair of bee motif socks donated by Anne Cabell.

To be eligible for OCBA's door prize giveaways you must be a member. **Join OCBA now.**

BEE2BEE LIBRARY

OCBA now has a beekeeper-to-beekeeper lending library. Members who are willing to lend volumes from their personal beekeeping libraries are encouraged to participate. By clicking on the [Bee2Bee Library](#) link on OCBA's website you can see a list of books that other members are willing to lend. Each book listed will be accompanied by the contact information for the member who is willing to share a book from their personal beekeeping library.



Members can directly and personally make beekeeper-to-beekeeper arrangements for borrowing and returning the book.

If you are interested in loaning books from your library, please send email to Bee2Bee.Library@gmail.com with a list of the books that you are willing to loan and the phone number or email address that you would like members to use when they contact you about borrowing a book.

This is an honor system. Everyone who borrows a book is expected to take appropriate care of it and to return it as arranged with the book's owner. Access to the Bee2Bee Library is a benefit of OCBA membership. You must be a fully paid up member of OCBA to participate. Please join and maintain your OCBA membership.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND SPEAKERS

OCBA's website now features a calendar on the home page where members can stay informed about upcoming speakers, field days, community outreach events and other information of interest to our beekeeping community.

August 9 Membership Meeting – Mark Powers will present "Bee Sting Allergy, What You Need to Know." Learn how to evaluate the severity of your bee sting symptoms and what to do if your venom response is excessive.

September 13 Membership Meeting – James Withrow, a PhD candidate in Dr. Tarpy's lab will discuss his current research which is focused on queen behavior and setting up colonies with multiple queens.

October 11 Membership Meeting – Suzy Spencer of 5 County Beekeepers Association will teach us the nuances of honey tasting.

November 8 Membership Meeting – Guy Fricke will talk about artificial insemination of queens.

December 13 Holiday Gathering – Come and share your best finger food with friends and beekeeping colleagues at the 3rd Annual *Hors d'oeuvres for Honey Lovers*. OCBA will provide the beverages.

Upcoming Outreach Events:

August 18 National Honeybee Day! We will need folks to help out at information booths at the Chapel Hill Farmers' Market and also at the Eno Farmers Market in Hillsborough. You may sell honey at the Chapel Hill Farmers' Market. Email Chris at chrisapple1231@gmail.com to sign up. We will need at least 2 people at each venue.

September 15 The Hillsborough library is hosting an event in the children's department. OCBA will talk about bees and then lead the children in a craft. Elizabeth Strong, Lou Rascoe and Jenn Phelan will head up this event.

Other Events of Note

August 13-17, [Eastern Apicultural Society](#) Annual Meeting in Hampton, VA. This conference will feature Randy Oliver and Jamie Ellis among other prestigious beekeeping experts. If you attend, please fill out an [Individual GAP Form \(Box D6\)](#) *Attended a national or international beekeeping meeting* and pass the completed form to Cynthia Speed or John Rintoul.