

OCBA Up to the Minutes News

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OCBA HOLIDAY GATHERING

46 members shared beekeeping stories and great food at this year's holiday gathering on December 13th. Delicious finger foods, *hors d'oeuvres*, and sweet treats were the order of the evening. Honey was a key ingredient in many of the offerings.

Celeste Mayer's Black-eyed Pea Cakes were a special favorite. Several people asked for the recipe. So to help you prepare for your upcoming New Year's and Super Bowl parties you'll find Celeste's recipe below.

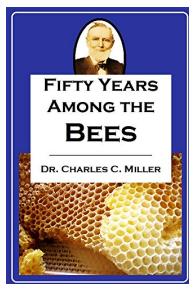


L-R Back - John Rintoul, Carol Carter, Preston Miller, Becky Manda, Carrie Donley, John Wallace, Walter Starks
L-R Middle - Amy Singleton, Cynthia Speed, Chris Apple, Kirsten Stacy-Bothwell
L-R Kneeling - Dawn Rogers, Karen Lauterbach, Mark Powers, Larry Arnold

While many in attendance opted for more traditional holiday attire others proudly displayed their OCBA pride wearing their new OCBA tees

50 YEARS AMONG THE BEES – C.C. MILLER

by Chris Apple



When I first considered reading *Fifty Years Among the Bees* by C.C. Miller, I assumed I was in for a rather tedious read on bee history. Miller is, of course, the Miller of Miller feeder fame. Since this book was published in 1903, I felt it was certainly not relevant to my beekeeping. Nonetheless, I felt I wanted to read the book to glean some insight into pre-varroa beekeeping. I was happily surprised. Miller writes with great doses of laugh out loud humor. Additionally, his discussion of his day-to-day trials in his apiaries, his very humble attitude about his beekeeping skills and his in-depth discussion about all his beekeeping inventions came together to create a very enlightening book and one that remains very relevant to our current beekeeping enterprises. I mention that it is still relevant because Miller was a thinking beekeeper. He was always looking at his process and the equipment available to him to evaluate potential improvements. We've come a long way with our beekeeping process and equipment since 1903. However, Miller's book gently reminds us that new ways of looking at what we are currently doing in our apiaries can often help us become better beekeepers.

OCBA – THE 50% SOLUTION

A recent comment in *Bee Culture* magazine stated that, "Beekeeping is not big agriculture. Beekeeping is big families. A lot of brothers, sons, dads, grandfathers." Tracey Smith, a beekeeper and contributor to an international beekeeping listserv, objected to that gender-biased view of beekeeping noting that she and other women in beekeeping were also a significant part of those 'big beekeeping families'. She pointed out that statistically women make up approximately half of every family – with the notable exception of the female-dominated honey bee families found in our hives.

Tracey's comment prompted a quick look at OCBA's membership statistics. We currently have 210 active members. 105 of our members are women – the other 105 are men.

WHAT'S BLOOMING NOW?



Bees in urban areas often find provisions on those rare winter days when temperatures rise high enough to allow the foragers to take flight. Recently bees in Hillsborough, Chapel Hill and Carrboro have been returning to their hives with pale, yellow pollen packed in their corbiculae (aka 'pollen baskets'). A quick survey of nearby neighborhoods revealed the most likely source of pollen to be Yuletide camellias (*Camellia sasanqua* 'Yuletide') a reliable favorite in urban landscapes. Other sasanqua cultivars perform equally as well as sources of winter pollen, but may bloom slightly before or after Yuletide.

As we move toward mid-January urban beekeepers may see a brighter yellow pollen coming into their hives from another popular landscaping plant, the Japanese Flowering Apricot

(*Prunus mume*). In the Piedmont, flowering apricots often burst into bloom about a week before the red maples.



(c) Kathy Keatley Garvey

Japanese Flowering Apricot (Prunus mume)

NEWS OF THE BEEKEEPING WORLD OUTSIDE OF ORANGE COUNTY – MACHINE DRAWN COMB

We are all familiar with beeswax foundation as a starter template for the bees in our hives. A manufacturer in Barcelona, Spain announced the invention of a machine to manufacture honeycomb with fully completed cells using beeswax. They assert that their manufactured honeycomb has been tested in Canada and Europe and has been well-received by the bees.

You can check out their claims, their honeycomb and see their machine in operation at www.breat.eu.

SAVORY BLACK-EYED PEA CAKES

Holiday Party favorite shared by Celeste Mayer from Foster's Old-Fashioned Favorites

Ingredients

- 4 cups fresh black-eyed peas
- 1 red onion
- ½ red bell pepper, diced
- 1 jalapeño pepper
- 4 oz. grated parmesan cheese
- 2 large eggs
- 2 Tbs flour
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp freshly ground black pepper
- ¼ cup chopped fresh parsley
- 2½ cups fresh bread crumbs
- 1/3 cup vegetable oil

Directions

1. Place peas in a saucepan & cover with 2" of water. Bring to boil and then reduce heat to medium-low. Cook, uncovered,

30 to 40 minutes until peas are tender but still holding their shape.

2. Preheat the oven to 300°F.
3. Drain the peas and divide in half. Mix one half in a large bowl with the onion, bell pepper, jalapeño, Parmesan, eggs, flour, garlic, oregano, salt, pepper, parsley and 1 cup of the bread crumbs. Mash with a potato masher until well blended.
4. Fold in the reserved peas and mix thoroughly. Scoop out about ½ cup of the mixture and form into a 3" patty about ½" thick. Repeat with remaining mixture.
5. Dip each patty into the remaining bread crumbs to coat both sides, shaking off any excess bread crumbs.
6. Heat half of the oil in a large, non-stick skillet over medium-high heat. Cook 6-8 patties at a time (do not crowd the skillet), uncovered, 4-5 minutes per side or until light golden brown and crispy on the outside. (Note: Turn the patties only once; if you turn them too often they will fall apart. If they brown too quickly, reduce the heat slightly.)
7. Drain on paper towels. Place on baking sheet and keep warm in the oven while the remaining patties are cooking. Serve immediately topped with chili sauce or Foster's famous Seven Pepper Jelly.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND SPEAKERS

January 10 OCBA Membership Meeting – James Withrow, a PhD candidate in Dr. Tapy's lab, will discuss his current research which is focused on queen behavior and setting up colonies with multiple queens.

Other Events of Note

March 1-2, 2019 – North Carolina State Beekeepers' Association Spring Meeting, Monroe, NC (east of Charlotte) at the Union County Extension Complex. This will be a joint meeting with the South Carolina Beekeepers' Association.

July 15-19, 2019 – Eastern Apicultural Society's Annual Meeting in Greenville, SC.

August 8-10, 2019 – North Carolina State Beekeepers Association Summer Meeting, Hickory, NC. Note that the date is a month later than usual to avoid a conflict with the Eastern Apicultural Society's meeting in Greenville, SC.

September 8-12, 2019 – Apimondia International Apicultural Congress, Montreal, Canada. Plan now to attend.

Spring 2020 – North Carolina State Beekeepers' Association Spring Meeting, New Bern, NC. For beekeepers who really plan ahead.