

OCBA Up to the Minutes News

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OCBA GROUP DINNER – COME AND JOIN THE DISCUSSION

14 members were joined by **Randall Austin**, the evening's speaker, for the pre-meeting dinner at Radius Pizzeria. Those in attendance discussed the poor nectar flow and honey crop 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.

OCBA WEBSITE HOSTS WALTER STARKS' BEECAM

Walter and Cathy Starks can watch their bees from the comfort of their air-conditioned living room. Now you can, too!



Walter positioned a small video camera in front of one of his most active hives. The camera broadcasts day and night 7 days a week. It is interesting to see how much activity there is even after the sun goes down. Seeing the bees clustered on the landing board after a hard day's work you can almost imagine that they are sitting back, sipping mead and telling tall tales of their day's achievements in the pollination business.

Walter's live BeeCam can be viewed by clicking on the link at the top of [OCBA's webpage](#), by visiting Walter's [Dogwood Acres Honey](#) webpage, or by going directly to YouTube™ and searching "Walter Starks Bee Yard." It's great! Check it out. And thanks to Walter for implementing this innovative approach to bee watching and for sharing it with OCBA.

NCSBA SUMMER CONFERENCE

Bee There – Bee Cool

NCSBA's Summer Conference will be held July 19-21 in Flat Rock, NC at Blue Ridge Community College. Learn from leading lights in the national beekeeping community. The featured speaker will be Dr. Thomas Seeley of Cornell University. Dr. Seeley is renowned in the beekeeping community for his research

and his seminal books "*Honey Bee Democracy*" and "*The Wisdom of the Hive*." Take a break from the heat. It will be much cooler in the Smokies than here in the heart of the Piedmont.

If you attend the conference remember to fill out an [Individual GAP Form](#) and pass it along to **Cynthia Speed**. OCBA receives 10 points for each OCBA member who attends the conference toward the 2018-19 Golden Achievement Program.



Highland Lake Dam outside of Flat Rock, NC – It even looks cooler!

SOME HONEY BEE PESTS AND TREATMENTS

Randall Austin was the featured presenter at OCBA's June 14th membership meeting presenting "Some Honey Bee Pests and Treatments." He focused on the small hive beetle (SHB) and on Varroa destructor. He explained the life cycle of these two hive pests and how each can result in colony loss.

About SHB he noted that there are often a few beetles in each hive, but they can be managed by a strong colony. In a weak colony, however, the SHB larvae can quickly overwhelm the colony's defenses. They will eat anything in their path: pollen, honey, eggs, and even pupae.

To distinguish between SHB and wax moth larvae, Randall pointed out that SHB larvae are white to tan in color while wax moth larvae are white to gray. An SHB larva has six legs in the front and drags its behind as it moves while the wax moth larva is a caterpillar like and moves more like an inch worm. He referenced a great article written by a locally renowned, well-

informed beekeeper entitled "[Love a Beetle!](#)" The article can be found on the Bailey Bee Supply website.



Randall went on to discuss varroa mites. Varroa first appeared in the US in 1987 and quickly moved across the country. It is now found worldwide except Australia. It parasitizes pupae and adult bees and is a major vector for viral and bacterial disease. While varroa cannot be eliminated they can be effectively managed if beekeepers are diligent. The most successful varroa management technique is to be proactive. Regular sampling provides an estimate of the mite population in the hive and affords beekeepers an opportunity to select the most appropriate treatment - drone brood removal, brood interruption, requeening, synthetic chemical treatments, thymol based products and organic acids. He cautioned against using unapproved or unproven treatments because it is illegal.



Varroa Management Field Day at Randall Austin's Apiary

Randall's takeaway message was simple – "All colonies have or will have varroa. It will kill them if you let it."

He heavily stressed the good work that the [Honeybee Health Coalition](#) is doing and encouraged everyone to use the free tools and resources there. There are numerous demonstration videos where both testing and treatment methods are clearly demonstrated.

Two days after Randall's presentation he hosted a field day at his bee yard to demonstrate what he considers the simplest and most effective way to monitor varroa loads in honey bee colonies. The Varroa Management Workshop was attended by 24 beekeepers.

EXTRACTION WORKSHOP IS WELL-ATTENDED

On Saturday, June 9th, **Mark Powers** and **Brad Kosiba** met with 16 OCBA beekeepers to share their experiences with extracting honey. The 2018 Honey Extraction Workshop took place at Cedar Ridge High School in Hillsborough thanks to arrangements made by OCBA member **Keith Yow** who teaches cabinet and furniture making at the high school. In his capacity as President of OCBA, Mark extended an invitation to Durham County Beekeepers Association to co-host the workshop so that beekeepers from both associations could gain extraction experience.



Mark explains the bee escape board

Honey comb for the workshop was produced by the bees at the Briggs Avenue Community Garden in Durham. Brad and Mark shared their experience and their individual techniques based on their extraction efforts in prior years. Participants were given the

opportunity to uncap comb and operate the extractor. This hands-on experience will serve them well as they move on to extract their own honey.



Brad demonstrates the hot knife as an uncapping tool

SUPPORT NCSU'S APICULTURE PROGRAM

Mark Powers read a letter from **Rick Coor**, NC State Beekeepers Association President, that was addressed to the local chapters. In the letter Rick noted that the NCSBA's long-

standing method of raising funds for NCSU's Apiculture Program via Silent Auctions held at each statewide conference does not raise sufficient money to adequately support NCSU's Apiculture Program. Rick observed that the actual donors are a small group of conference attendees who make items for the Silent Auctions and who place bids on the items. He suggested that each chapter directly raise funds for the apiculture program.

After reading the letter to the membership, Mark and Randall led off the collection by dropping their contributions into a donation bag. The bag was then passed through the room and a few minutes later **Nerissa Rivera**, OCBA's Treasurer, reported that OCBA had garnered a total of \$491.29 to donate to the NCSU Apiculture Program. The funds will be forwarded to NCSBA's Treasurer to be pooled with funds donated by other chapters. At the summer conference in Flat Rock NCSBA's President will present the pooled funds to **Dr. David Tarpy** who heads NCSU's Apiculture Program.

Thanks to everyone who donated. If you were not at the meeting, or if you were but weren't carrying cash and would like to donate, please send your check to Nerissa Rivera, OCBA, P.O. Box 683, Hillsborough, NC, 27278.

SUMMER OUTREACH CONTINUES ITS SCORCHING PACE

By Chris Apple

BRIGGS AVENUE COMMUNITY GARDEN

On Friday, June 1, **Chris Apple** set up an information booth in front of Briggs Avenue Community Garden's apiary in Durham. She participated in Durham County Agricultural Extension Agency's "Report to the Community." The event was well attended and she had the opportunity to share information to lots of folks, young and old alike.



Briggs Avenue Community Garden – Beekeeping Information Table

Chapel Hill Public Library

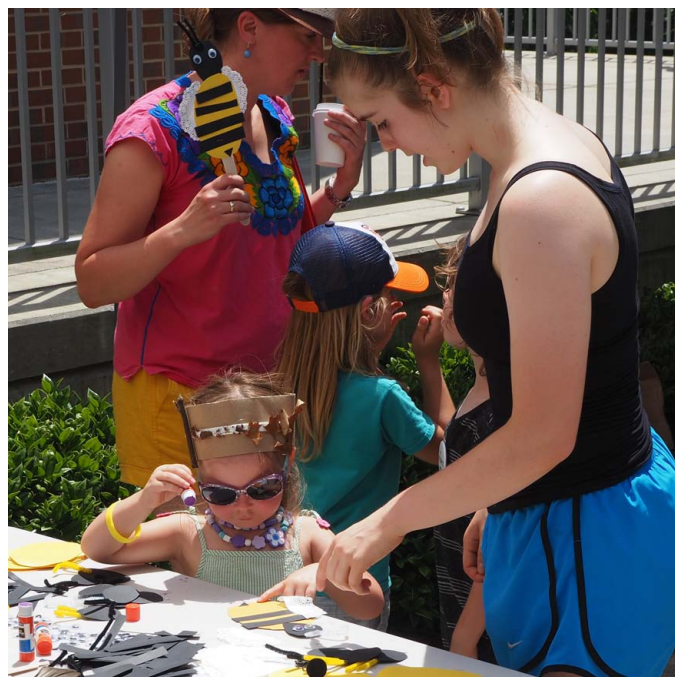
On Friday, June 8th OCBA sponsored an information table at the Chapel Hill Public Library's Summer Blast. The Summer Blast event celebrates the end of the school year and kicks off summer reading and educational programs for children in Chapel Hill and Carrboro.

In addition to OCBA's bee education table, the festival hosted tables sponsored by NC Forestry, NC Wildlife Resources Commission, local arts groups, and others. OCBA's table was strategically located across from the pollinator garden recently established by the library and representatives of the North Carolina Botanical Garden.

OCBA members who participated in the Summer Blast festival included: **Chris Apple, Cynthia Speed, Megan Talikoff, Stephanie Bullins, Lou Rascoe, Lisa Vogel, Jessica Mjelde** and **Dawn Rogers**.



Chapel Hill Public Library Summer Blast Festival



Megan Talikoff helps queen bee design her bee fan

Sunshine Lavender Farm

On Saturday and Sunday, June 9th and 10th, OCBA set up an information booth at Sunshine Lavender Farm's "Lavender Celebration." The table was ideally situated in front of the farm's hives and under a giant tulip poplar. Saturday **Chris Apple, Lauren Carreto** and **Carrie Donley** enjoyed sharing honey

bee information with the crowd. On Sunday, Chris was joined by **Elizabeth Strong**. It was very warm both days, but everyone stayed hydrated with lavender lemonade and kept cool with lavender Locopops. The event was well attended and the beekeepers were happy to have a nice shady spot under a tulip poplar!



Honey bee education at Annie's Sunshine Lavender Farm's Annual Lavender Harvest Celebration

On Monday, June 11th **Lisa Vogel** and **Vicki Robertson** met with students at the Goddard School in Chapel Hill to talk with them about honey bees and pollination in preparation for National Pollinator Week. Lisa and Vicki met with four different classes. That's a lot of potential beekeepers, entomologists, naturalists, environmentalists and scientists of all kinds!



GETTING ORGANIZED FOR THE STATE FAIR

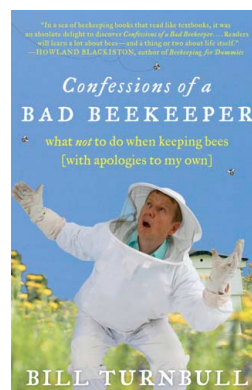
John Rintoul gave a PowerPoint presentation depicting a small sampling of bee club exhibits at past state fairs. OCBA won best in show in 2010, but information about OCBA's exhibits in subsequent years was sketchy. Last year OCBA did not sponsor an exhibit because there was insufficient interest from our members. John's presentation included a slide illustrating the sad state of OCBA member participation in 2016. We have high hopes for a strong exhibit this year. John introduced **Rob Jewett** who will coordinate our state fair exhibit effort this year. If you would like to be on Rob's committee or have an idea that will put us over the top, please email Rob at: historyquy.learn@gmail.com.

OCBA DOOR PRIZES FOR JUNE

Door prizes at this month's meeting were: a 5-gallon honey bucket with lid and installed honey gate; a collection of extraction tools including a honey gate, a stainless steel honey strainer, and a mesh bag; Muth jars with cork stoppers donated and plastic honey bears. Items for this month's door prizes were donated by **Cedric Pearce**, **Anne Cabell** and **Bailey Bee Supply**. To be eligible for OCBA's door prize giveaways you must be a member. Join OCBA now.

FUN SUMMER READ FOR BEEKEEPERS

By Meredith Friedrick



Confessions of a Bad Beekeeper: What Not to Do When Keeping Bees [with Apologies to My Own] by Bill Turnbull

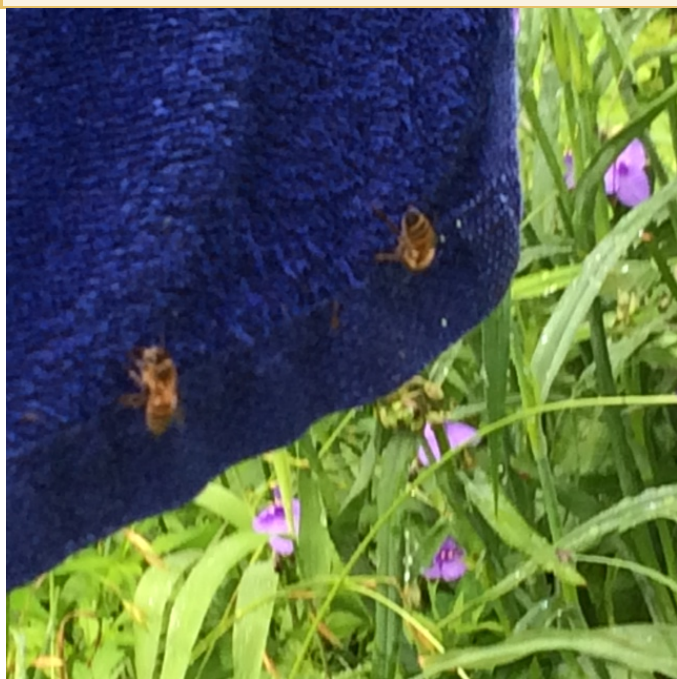
In 2010, Bill Turnbull worked for the BBC as a news co-host in the UK. He was also the founder of his own one-person-club, The Bad Beekeeper's Club. While none of us would aspire to be a member of his club, there are days when I wonder if I'm being recruited to join. Mr. Turnbull humorously tells us about his adventures learning about beekeeping (donning his bee suit for the first time and finding bees inside!), setting up a hive, acquiring equipment (often at auctions), catching swarms (in chimneys!) and extracting honey in his kitchen. His ever-patient wife is often Mr. Turnbull's "straight man." When discussing aspects of beekeeping, he outlines outrageous possibilities that may or may not befall him while performing a task. He involves the reader with a droll statement, "you know what happened next, right?" to keep us in on the joke.

His adventures are totally relatable, whether novice or master beekeeper. But along with his humor, he also shares his fascination as he stands still watching his bees drink water from moss on top of his garage roof, and his feeling of peace while "sticking his head down into a hive."

A friend recommended this book, so I checked it out of the library. It is first a comedic book with its second goal to be an overview of beekeeping; it's not particularly useful as a reference. There are two sections (one about his participation in a quiz show, and another about being a contestant in a dancing show on BBC called *Strictly Come Dancing*) that, while funny, have little to do with beekeeping and felt a little like "padding." I would recommend this book as a light read, something to keep you going during winter months or if you're having a bad day with your bees.

[NOTE: 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.]

HANGING OUT WITH THE BEES



We all know that bees need water. **Kathy Buck** sent this picture of her bees sucking water from a towel that was left on her clothesline during a thundershower. Thanks to Kathy for this beekeeping and energy-saving tip. Keep your bees at home. Hang your laundry on the line **before** the final spin cycle while it is still dripping wet. And to continue to keep the bees happy, hose it down if it starts to dry. 😎

[NOTE: If you have an interesting picture of your bees share your photos with the rest of OCBA. Send your pics via email with [Bee Oddities](#) in the subject line.]

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.

July 12 Membership Meeting – OCBA members can ask questions of our own expert panel of beekeepers. Randall Austin, Walter Starks, and Will Hicks – experienced beekeepers all – will field questions from members.

August 9 Membership Meeting – Mark Powers will present "Hymenoptera Venom Allergy." Learn how to evaluate the severity of your bee sting symptoms. What to do if your venom response is excessive.

September 13 Membership Meeting – TBD

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 *hors d'oeuvres* with friends and beekeeping colleagues. OCBA will provide the beverages.

OTHER EVENTS OF NOTE

July 19-21, North Carolina State Beekeepers Association Summer Conference will be held in Flat Rock. Plan now to attend. You can register online or at the door. If you attend, please fill out an [Individual GAP Form](#) (**Box D5**) and pass the completed form to Cynthia Speed or John Rintoul.

August 18, National Honey Bee Day. Be prepared to volunteer with Chris Apple for multiple community outreach events that are likely to be scheduled in Orange County.

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.