

OCBA Up to the Minutes News

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November 2018

OCBA GROUP DINNER

Come and join the discussion

After a two month hurricane hiatus the turnout for OCBA's pre-meeting dinner at Radius was once again well-attended. 15 members gathered before the November meeting and were joined by our speaker for the evening, **Guy Fricks**.

All members and visitors 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.

THIRD HIGH SCHOOL BEE CLUB FOUNDED IN ORANGE COUNTY

East Chapel Hill High School's newly organized Bee Club under the leadership of OCBA's 2018 Apprentice **Megan Talikoff** is seeking funds to establish beehives on the ECHHS campus. The club is employing online crowd sourced funding. If you are interested in supporting the ECHHS Bee Club you can do so by following this link: [ECHHS GoFundMe Campaign](#). (See Megan's article below describing her efforts to kick off the ECHHS Bee Club)

Catherine Trusky, OCBA's other 2018 Apprentice, led the effort to establish the Chapel Hill High School Bee Club last year. All three high schools in the Chapel Hill-Carrboro Community School system now have active bee clubs.

OCBA'S NEWEST JOURNEYMAN BEEKEEPER



Master Beekeeper, Randall Austin, congratulates Lou Rascoe, OCBA's newest Journeyman Beekeeper

OCBA's newest Journeyman Beekeeper, **Lou Rascoe**, started her beekeeping journey as a 2016 graduate of OCBA's Bee School. Lou has been a reliable volunteer with OCBA's Outreach Program. She's shared her love of beekeeping with elementary school groups and regularly volunteers to staff beekeeping information tables at community festivals and events.

2019 OCBA OFFICERS ELECTED

OCBA's Executive Board proposed a slate of officers and directors for 2019 that included the following:

Ryan Chamberlain, President
Lou Rascoe, Vice President
Cynthia Speed, Secretary
Nerissa Rivera, Treasurer
Randall Austin, Education Director
Chris Apple, Outreach Coordinator
Lisa Vogel, Mentorship/Apprenticeship Director

There were no nominations from the members attending the meeting. After the motion to approve the slate of candidate was made and seconded, **Mark Powers** called for a vote. Approval was unanimous. Mark will continue to serve on the Executive Board throughout 2019 as Immediate Past-President.

OCBA'S 2018 TEE SHIRTS

Members who ordered tee shirts picked up their orders at the November meeting. **Mark Powers** chose to suit up immediately to chair the meeting. Shirts were offered in both short and long sleeved versions in addition to a v-neck option for the ladies.



Mark showing off his presidential wardrobe

Several members who had not ordered shirts and others who were interested in purchasing additional shirts asked whether there would be an opportunity to place a second order. If there is sufficient interest a second order will be placed. Shirt colors and pricing may change. Our original pricing was based on quantities ordered. Contact [John Rintoul](#) if you are interested.

NEWS OF THE BEEKEEPING WORLD OUTSIDE OF ORANGE COUNTY

Brushy Mountain Bee Farm, a well-known supplier of all things beekeeping, is out of business. All stores are closed. The Brushy Mountain website simply says that it is temporarily 'down for maintenance.' Brushy Mountain's surprise closing on November 10th was unanticipated and without notice.



Meanwhile another beekeeping supply company, Mann Lake Ltd., completed its purchase of former rival Kelley Beekeeping which was founded in 1924 by Walter T. Kelley. The purchase was completed and announced November 14th.

EAST CHAPEL HILL HIGH BEE CLUB

A beekeeping apprentice's journey to build a bee community
By Megan Talikoff

It was the third week of September, and East Chapel Hill High School was settling into a routine. As students, we'd become familiar with our teachers and their expectations, and homework began to be more of a habitual annoyance than the incomprehensible torture we were subjected to on the first week back from summer vacation. It was the perfect time for Club Week; everyone was ready to explore new projects and find friends in different circles for the upcoming year. So, armed with a jumbo bag of Reese's peanut butter cups, my glittery bee wings, a poster, and a sign-up sheet, I set up my table in the crowded gym and waited for people to be lured in by my candy.

The ideas that led up to that day were sparked during the OCBA's 2018 Bee School, when I learned about Chapel Hill High School's bee club from Catherine, my fellow apprentice. During that time, I was also informed that Carrboro High School kept hives on their school campus, and it seemed only logical that East should have a Bee Club, as well. Our school has a fairly extensive rear campus, with little student traffic, a pond, and a preliminary pollinator garden -- the perfect location for a new, apicultural campus addition. And over the course of the spring, through conversations with friends about my hives, I learned that many more students at East were interested in honey bees and their protection than I had previously realized.

It was with these thoughts in mind that I approached the beginning of the 2018-19 school year. A week into classes, I asked my chemistry teacher and fellow beekeeper if she would like to be the advisor of a Bee Club at East. With her agreement, the signatures of a handful of friends, and a brief application, the club was approved, and assigned a day during club week to recruit student sign-ups. That day, over 40 people joined the club. Shocked, I attributed it to the quality of the candy I was offering. Most people had Laffy Taffy, Smarties, or Hershey's Kisses, so Reese's Cups were clearly the superior choice! Still, I was thrilled: even if half of the people showed up to meetings, it would be enough to keep going with the project.

About 30 people showed up at the first Bee Club meeting, and we took that day to establish our goals: install and maintain hives on campus, generate honey for the school's cafeteria and foods classes, promote awareness about honey bees and issues surrounding their survival, create wild bee hotels and other structures to support native pollinators, and pay for pesticide testing on campus, to begin a transition towards a limited use of neonicotinoids in the district.

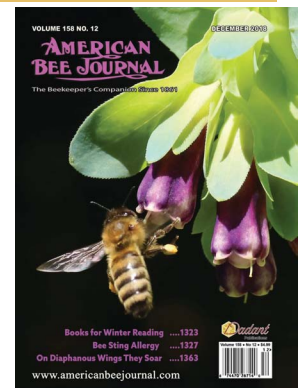
As of today, the club is fundraising, with the hope that we'll be able to finance the installation of at least one hive on campus this spring. A small team of us are writing grants, and another

group is selling bee-themed stickers. Our first bake sale will be held in front of the Chapel Hill Courthouse on Saturday, December 1, so feel free to stop by! We also have a GoFundMe page, just in case a kindly old philanthropist decides they'd like to fund a project entitled "[Public School Looking for Beehives!](#)" on his or her quest to improve the world.

Being a part of Bee Club has been a really exciting journey for me this year. It's been fun to realize that many of my peers also geek out over honey bees, and that they're willing to dedicate time and effort to a project that they won't be getting a grade on. Who knows -- maybe Bee School will be seeing a few younger faces this year. And with any luck, you'll soon be hearing about the honey bee hives on East Chapel Hill High School's campus.

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

Mark Powers has had a busy year. He started 2018 by stepping into the role of President of OCBA. In June he joined **Brad Kosiba** to head up OCBA's Honey Extraction Workshop. Starting in March he served as personal mentor to one of OCBA's apprentices. At OCBA's August membership meeting he brought OCBA beekeepers up to speed on the dangers of bee allergies and heat exhaustion. And now, for his Presidential swan song, he closed out the year sharing his bee allergy expertise with the nation's beekeeping community via his article in the December edition of the American Bee Journal entitled "Bee Sting Allergy: What You Need to Know." Well done, Mark!



INSTRUMENTAL INSEMINATION OF QUEENS

At our November meeting **Guy Fricks**, OCBA member and owner of Fricks Farm & Apiaries in Chapel Hill, familiarized OCBA beekeepers with the basic principles of successful instrumental insemination (II).

Guy explained the differences between breeder queens and open-mated queens. Open-mated queens mate in the wild with



20+ drones of unknown genetic traits. Breeder queens are instrumentally inseminated allowing careful selection of desirable traits through control of drone stock. Guy raises his own drones for insemination purposes. He produces instrumentally inseminated breeder queens from carefully selected local stocks. He also produces open-mated queens, bee packages, and nucleus colonies for sale.

Guy started learning instrumental insemination in March 2018 because he was unhappy with the quality of the breeder queens that he could purchase from other suppliers. His II efforts are supported with funding from a RAFI (Rural Advancement Foundation International) grant. To hone his craft he attended a workshop given by Dr. Sue Cobey of Washington State University. He invested in the required II equipment and after lots of trial and error produced his own viable breeder queens. He acknowledged that his highly sophisticated lab is currently located in his wife's kitchen.

2018 APPRENTICE REPORTS

Catherine Trusky and **Megan Talikoff** were OCBA's two apprentices for 2018. Everyone is in agreement – they were stellar! At November's meeting they provided our membership with a summary of their first years in beekeeping.



Megan Talikoff told members that keeping bees was the most interesting thing she had ever done. In spite of her new hives swarming, the stings, and a shocking late season jump in mite counts, she learned a great deal from her hives, dubbed Eloise, Frances and Harriet. She enjoyed attending the Summer NCSBA conference and learned a great deal from the nationally renowned speakers. She especially enjoyed

the bee yard demonstrations provided by Don Hopkins and other staff of the state inspections division. She will continue her beekeeping career while heading up the newly formed East Chapel Hill High School Bee Club which she started. Megan was mentored by **Mark Powers**.

Catherine Trusky has long been obsessed with honey bees. As a child she convinced her parents to invest in a bee suit for her at an early age. She started a bee club at Chapel Hill High School before she had ever opened a box of bees. She said that her 2018 experience with actual bees was "amazing." Catherine was impressed with how quickly



her colonies, identified as Twinkie and Slurpie, built new comb. She has become interested in bee photography and will pursue that interest as she continues her beekeeping career. Catherine was mentored by **Elizabeth Pratson**.

Both apprentices expressed their gratitude to OCBA for the opportunity and assistance received as they became beekeepers and thanked their mentors and others within OCBA for the support, expertise and encouragement.

A CLUSTER'S TAKE ON A QUILTING BEE

By Cynthia Speed



Joan Kalnitsky, Lauren Carreto, Cynthia Speed, Nancy Oglesby, and Kenneth Lee and preparing quilt boxes

Nancy Oglesby chose a beautiful day to host our last cluster get together. It was her idea to have a quilt box party. A few of the Hillsborough cluster members met last month and assembled quilt boxes for use in their hives this winter. We thought we would test out the theory behind its usage which is to create a structure above the hive colony that will absorb moisture created by warm bees in a cold environment. Instead of freezing cold droplets forming on the bottom of the inner cover and falling down upon the hapless bees, the moisture is trapped in the wood shavings within the box directly above the super. The light, fluffy wood chips are the same temperature as the air above the brood nest, so the moisture does not condense on the wood chips. Instead, the humid air rises and goes right through the hardware cloth stapled to the bottom of the box, through the burlap and through the wood chips until it hits the cold inner surface of the telescoping cover. Once it hits that cold surface, the moisture condenses (just like in a regular hive) and then rains back down. Instead of drops falling on the brood nest, they land on the wood chips and are absorbed. We will expect to see that only the surface layer is wet.



Joan and Lauren fill quilt boxes with cedar shavings

We had a great cluster this year that reached out via google groups to talk about issues and to share solutions. We snacked on delicious treats, wished each other good luck with our bees, and promised to keep in touch.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Chris Apple, Director of Outreach, talked about the amazing job the Girl Scout Jennifer Persia did in preparing materials for the club. While earning her Girl Scout Gold Award, Jennifer purchased and donated several bee related books for elementary aged children. She compiled a 3-ring binder of craft suggestions, developed honey bee PowerPoint presentations, and wrote talking points for outreach to young children. If you have hesitated to get involved in an outreach opportunity because you didn't know what to say or needed materials, Chris has what you need. There's no need to start from scratch.

On Saturday, October 13th, **Lou Rascoe** and **Jennifer Phelan** spent an afternoon with children at The Orange County Public Library in Hillsborough at a honey bee event. Everyone enjoyed talking about the bees and observing, smelling, and feeling the warmth of the observation hive. Jennifer and Louise enjoyed watching how creative the children were while creating their honey bee craft. One boy even make a Ninja honey bee!

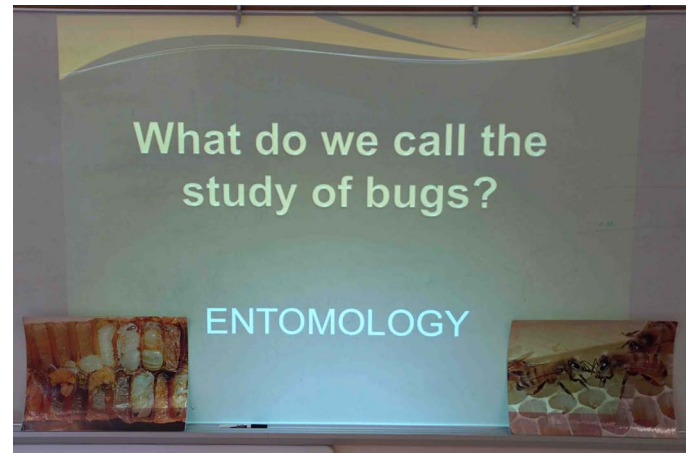


Lou Rascoe

Orange County Public Library Children's Bee Event

On October 13th **John Rintoul** talked with potential new beekeepers at two introduction to beekeeping events. The first, at Orange County Public Library on October 13th, was attended by 4 people. The second, at Chapel Hill Public Library on October 27th, was attended by 12 community members.

On Monday, November 6th, **Chris Apple** talked to three different second grade classes at Northside Elementary School in Chapel Hill. The classes were studying bugs and OCBA was invited to come to talk about bugs, in particular honey bees. A 30 minute PowerPoint was presented, samples of comb and pollen were passed around and 15 minutes we're allotted to hear from the audience. As always, the children were enthusiastically engaged and everyone had a good time.



On November 14th **Randall Austin** presented "Benefits of Honey Bees: Pollination" to the East Chapel Hill High School Bee Club. This was the first educational session for the newly formed ECHHS Bee Club.

THE JOYS OF BEEKEEPING

RICHARD TAYLOR (BEEKEEPER & PHILOSOPHER 1919-2018)

"When you are confronted with some problem in the apiary and you do not know what to do, then do nothing. Matters are seldom made worse by doing nothing and are often made much worse by inept intervention."

OCBA DOOR PRIZES FOR NOVEMBER

Door prizes at October's meeting included a quilt box donated by **Cynthia Speed**. 2 blocks of candy board for winter feeding donated by Bailey Bee Supply and an NCSBA centennial edition cookbook, *A Taste of Honey*, donated by Chris Apple. **Jeanne Arnts** was very excited to win the quilt box.

To be eligible for OCBA's door prize giveaways you must be a member. OCBA has great door prizes in store for future meetings. [Join OCBA now.](#)

SEEKING 2019 APPRENTICES

OCBA has had an excellent run of outstanding apprentices. We hope to continue that tradition in 2019. Applications are now being accepted for 2019 apprenticeships. **Lisa Vogel**, Director of OCBA's Mentorship and Apprenticeship program, asks that members direct interested youth to the [application link](#) on OCBA's website. Potential beekeepers are eligible if they are between the ages of 10 and 16 and are residents of Orange County.

OCBA apprentices receive bee school tuition, hives, basic beekeeping tools, bees and personal mentors. All told the apprenticeship starter package exceeds \$750 in value.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND SPEAKERS

December 13 OCBA 3rd Annual Hors d'oeuvres for Honey Lovers holiday gathering – Come and share your best finger foods with friends and beekeeping colleagues. Food prepared with honey-sourced recipes are always appreciated, but not required. OCBA will provide the beverages and paper ware.