

*“Don't worry about getting perfect, just keep getting better.”*

— Frank Peretti

OCBA built its first website around 2005/2006. The domain “ocba.org” was already taken by the Oakland County Bar Association, so the name “theocba.org” was chosen to emphasize that we are THE group you are looking for! There have been many dedicated webmasters and caretakers of the website over the past 15 years and they deserve extreme praise for the countless hours they’ve volunteered to make it the go-to place for information about the OCBA. These include Jeff Bollinger (who originally built the site), Todd Walker, John Rintoul, Jessica Mjelde and many others. But just as cars, fashions and people eventually start to show their age, the website was due for an overhaul to take advantage of new web styles, rearrange the organization of content and offer brand new, exciting features.

The ideal opportunity arose when OCBA was awarded the much-deserved “Beekeepers’ Association of the Year” award for 2019 by the NCSBA’s Golden Achievement Program (GAP). Along with the recognition came a grant for \$700 to be spent in a way that furthers OCBA’s fundamental objectives. The OCBA Board of Directors quickly decided that bringing our website up to modern expectations would definitely benefit our membership and allow us to better promote science-based, responsible beekeeping in Orange County. The NCSBA GAP Committee agreed that this was an appropriate use of the grant funds and OCBA formed a team of enthusiastic, extremely talented volunteers to bring the idea to fruition.

The OCBA Website Redesign Workgroup began by surveying the membership to determine what we both liked and disliked about the old site and what we would like to see in a new one. This feedback formed the backbone of the new site’s design. The team met nine times between February and June, first face to face and then remotely due to COVID-19.



OCBA's website look has been a familiar presence for many years. But just as a honey bee egg becomes a larva, a larva becomes a pupa and a pupa becomes an adult, our website has moved to the next level.



The new website greets the viewer with a vibrant photo of our favorite creepy crawly. All of the valuable content is still there, plus more!

The result is a fresh-faced website with new content and features, while carefully retaining the valuable elements of its predecessors. New aspects include an extraction-equipment booking calendar, online club merchandise portal and a listing of members who have local hive products to sell. The section that has perhaps the most exciting potential is a new “What’s in Bloom” feature that has extensive information about Orange County’s nectar and pollen sources (including bloom times, relative value to honey bees, etc.) supplemented by member-submitted photos of honey bees on the flowers.

Concurrent with the website redesign was an overhaul of the OCBA’s logo. As with the website, there have been several versions of the OCBA logo over the years. The Board of Directors agreed that a fresh new website deserves a fresh new logo. An artist and graphic designer were contracted to develop and deliver a logo that graphically epitomizes what the club means to its members. The result is a fantastic depiction of bees encircled in

trophallactic sharing... or is it a flower with colorful petals? The slightly surreal effect illustrates our community of beekeepers working within the larger community to help each other achieve a common goal, yet each of us having our own perspective. (At least that's the way I see it... as with any meaningful artwork, your interpretation is up to you!)

Many thanks go out to the Website Redesign Workgroup (Karen Lauterbach, Amy Stern, Erika Wittchen, Rob Zelt, Carrie Donley, Maribeth Hamilton and Celeste Mayer) and the Logo Designers (Loren Pease and Melissa Hudgens). For more information on how our new look was developed, see the fall issue of NCSBA's "Bee Buzz" quarterly.



The new logo represents OCBA in its many facets. What do you think those facets are?

*Written by Randall Austin, OCBA Education Director.*



Congratulate the Website Redesign Workgroup on a fantastic job and thank them for giving their time and expertise to the project!