

Orange County Beekeepers Association Meeting Minutes

May 13, 2021

7:00 - 9:00 pm via Zoom

Carrie Donley, OCBA president, opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. The meeting was attended by 29 people.

Novel Tool for Varroa Resistance

Tim Struttman, OCBA vice president, introduced our speaker, Phoebe Snyder (prsnyder@uncg.edu). Her talk was titled "From lab to market: a novel tool for varroa resistance." Phoebe discussed the history of varroa mites, including the discovery of *Varroa jacobsoni* in the 1900s as a parasite of *Apis cerana*. She also noted the appearance of varroa in the United States in the late 1980s and the 1998 study that distinguished *Varroa destructor* from *Varroa jacobsoni* based on mitochondrial DNA. Phoebe reviewed the various ways beekeepers have fought back against varroa, from the early treatments to the development of short-acting, extended release, and fumigant treatments. She said that with all of these treatments, "the dose makes the poison." Treatments for varroa can have sublethal effects on bees, including reduced queen body and ovary size, reduced worker life span, negative impact on memory learning and sucrose responsiveness in workers, and synergistic effects with other pesticides.

Phoebe explained that her research involves a beekeeper-applied spray that mimics "unhealthy brood odor," which causes hygienic bees to remove unhealthy larvae from the hive. This hygienic behavior can be quantified, allowing a colony's hygienic level to be evaluated. Phoebe and her team already have three patents for their tool, and they are awaiting a fourth. They are working to build a prototype - a small hand-held device that targets the spray and marks the test area in a way that bees cannot remove. They hope to begin testing the prototype in the spring of 2022. The tool will be useful for both hive management and breeding hygienic queens.

Outreach

Dawn Rogers said that OCBA will have a booth at the Hillsborough Garden Tour, which will run from 8 am - 4 pm on Saturday, May 15. In addition to talking about bees, OCBA will sell pollinator plants and honey. Dawn said we had a large donation of plants from Mike Scully at Cedar Ridge High School, and we also had plant donations from Maxine Mills, Jeanne Arnts, Larry Arnold, Mary Leonhardi, Rachel Royce, and Vicki and Kent Robertson.

Dawn said she has been getting more calls for presentations about bees. With help from Keith Glidewell, she is also working on creating videos that can be used to educate people about bees.

GAP

Carrie said that Maribeth Hamilton has agreed to be OCBA's representative on the Golden Achievement Program (GAP) committee. OCBA is ineligible to apply to win the award until 2023, since we won a GAP award in 2019. As part of the requirement for winning the GAP, OCBA must supply a GAP Committee Member for four years. Ryan Chamberlain served last year.

Director's Report

Chris Apple reported that the North Carolina State Beekeepers Association (NCSBA) will hold its fall meeting in person this year in Hickory, NC. The meeting will run for two days, November 19 & 20. This is the weekend before Thanksgiving, but it was the only time that organizers could find a venue to accommodate the statewide meeting.

Chris said the NC State Fair will happen this fall. She urged everyone to be thinking about entering honey samples, etc.

The written test, but not the practical, for the journeyman and masters levels will be held in Deep Gap, NC, on June 26. NCSBA may add a central or eastern NC testing location if they hear from enough people in other parts of the state that they would like a closer testing option. Contact Chris to give feedback.

State Fair

Carrie noted that two years ago the OCBA booth won second place at the NC State Fair. She asked OCBA members interested in working on a team to create an OCBA booth for the 2021 State Fair to contact her.

O&A for New Beekeepers

Carrie said OCBA will offer another Q&A for new beekeepers (0-3 years) on Monday, May 24, at 7 pm. John Rintoul and Walter Starks will be available to answer questions.

State Meeting in the Triangle

Pakis Bessias asked if we had ever considered hosting a NCSBA Conference in the Triangle. Chris Apple said she tried to do that when she and Cynthia Speed were co-presidents, but they had trouble finding an affordable venue that would work for a statewide meeting.

In-Person Meetings

Walter Starks asked when OCBA would resume in-person meetings. Carrie said the OCBA board would discuss when to move to in-person meetings at their June meeting.

Door Prize Winners

Chris Apple - Tote bag and book

Keith Glidewell - Honey jar

Walter Starks - Inner feeder

Next month's meeting will be held on Thursday, June 10, at 7 pm. Our speaker will be Sydney Ross, pesticide operations specialist from the NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Sciences, and Jason Williams, pesticide inspector. They will share case studies of improper pesticide application, including ones that result in drift.