

Orange County Beekeepers Association

Minutes

September 9, 2021

7:00 pm

Carrie Donley, OCBA president, opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. The meeting was attended by 34 people on Zoom and by 10 people at the new Orange County Extension Office in Hillsborough.

Hive Sounds

Tim Struttman, OCBA vice president, introduced our speaker, Dr. Jerry Bromenshenk. Dr. Bromenshenk holds a Ph.D. in insect ethology (behavior) from Montana State University. He co-founded Bee Alert Technology in 2003 and is the statewide director of Montana's EPSCoR program (Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research). His research focuses on insect behavior, ecotoxicology, population dynamics, and environmental chemistry.

Dr. Bromenshenk began by describing a study he conducted in 1985 with regional beekeepers in Tacoma, Washington, that provided data about trace elements of pollution from a nearby smelter. This was one of many studies Dr. Bromenshenk conducted using honey bees to measure trace amounts of pollutants in the environment. In a study for DARPA to develop a quick way to identify the release of a noxious gas, he and his colleagues noticed that the best indicator honey bees gave of a toxic gas release was a change in the sound of the hive. That led Dr. Bromenshenk to his current citizen-science study, which focuses on what the sounds of the hive can tell us about conditions within the hive. He described the study and the app it uses to record hive sounds and the results of a beekeeper's visual inspection. This data will help Dr. Bromenshenk and his colleagues develop a diagnostic tool for beekeepers. Learn more about this citizen science project [here](#).

Interview a Speaker

Carrie reported that we have a new initiative - interviewing speakers before our meeting and producing short videos to encourage people to attend. The videos are posted on the website one to two weeks before our meetings, and links to the videos are included in the meeting announcements sent out via the OCBA listserv. Carrie thanked Mary Anne Rhyne for her role in producing the videos and Keith Glidewell for helping with the editing. Carrie and Tim have also worked on this project, helping to develop questions and connecting Mary Anne with the speakers.

State Fair

Carrie said that OCBA will staff the NCSBA state fair booth this year on October 15. She said we still need volunteers. NCSBA will not be selling honey this year, but OCBA members can sell their own honey on the day OCBA has volunteered to staff the booth. Carrie noted that NCSBA

has set some price caps, (e.g., 16 oz. is \$12). Let her know if you're interested in selling your honey (cdonley33@gmail.com). Sign up at these links to volunteer in the booth:

- Volunteer with OCBA on Friday October 15th:
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090F44ABA72DA5FD0-ocba>
- Sign up to volunteer on another date:
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0e4cabaa28a13-ncsba>

Dawn Rogers said she still needs entries for a few categories in the State Fair competitions: dark honey, dry mead, and sweet mead. She will pick up your entry, take it to the State Fair, and return it to you. Contact Dawn at dawnrogers006@gmail.com if you have an entry to contribute.

December Meeting

Tim Struttman said he is putting together a committee to help plan our December holiday party. He is looking for committee members and will send an email soon via the OCBA listserv requesting volunteers.

Apprentice Program

Vicki Robertson said they are beginning to advertise the 2022 OCBA Apprenticeship Program, which gives two middle or high school students an opportunity to become beekeepers. Vicki said she will post a flyer on the listserv about the program, and she encourages OCBA members to distribute the flyer.

Bee School

Randall Austin said he has reserved the new Orange County Extension Office for the 2022 Bee School, which will run from mid-January through March on Tuesday nights from 7-9 pm. He said the current plan is to offer in-person classes, but if COVID numbers are high, the classes will be held via Zoom like they were in 2021. Randall said tuition will be the same as last year: \$75 per individual and \$125 per family. Signups for class start October 1. Send questions to orangebeeclass@gmail.com.

Door Prizes

OCBA Tote Bag: Cynthia Speed
T-shirt: Elisa Bailey

Our next meeting will be on Thursday, October 14. [Ali McAfee](#) will be our speaker.