

Orange County Beekeepers Association Minutes

November 9, 2021

7:00 pm

Carrie Donley, OCBA president, opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. The meeting was attended by 23 people on Zoom and by 12 people at the new Orange County Extension Office in Hillsborough.

Hive Monitoring

Tim Struttman, OCBA vice president, introduced our speaker, Dr. Rahman Tashakkori, Professor of Computer Science at Appalachian State University. Dr. Tashakkori received Appalachian State's first UNC ROI award to employ machine learning and bioinformatics to answer key questions about bee hive health, development, and genomic diversity.

Dr. Tashakkori's team's innovative and potentially game-changing approach acquires a vast amount of reliable data from healthy and unhealthy hives in diverse environments, as well as extensive use of data science for informed decision-making. In addition to collecting genomic data from about 30 hives, the project utilizes the App State designed and built "BeeMon" (abbreviation for Bee Monitoring). BeeMon provides a way to deliver hive data, including audio/video recordings, humidity, temperature, and weight, to a dedicated server for further analysis.

Because there is no need to open the hive with BeeMon, the system is helping scientists to learn about the health of honey bee hives with little or no stress or disturbance to the bees. So far, researchers can identify problems in the hive using BeeMon. With more data, they hope to be able to predict problems so they can be addressed early.

Thank you from Chris Apple

Chris thanked OCBA for all the support she has received in the past few months. She said OCBA has been a very important part of her life, and she will miss everyone when she moves.

2022 OCBA Leadership

Carrie presented the following leadership slate for 2022:

- Tim Struttman, President
- Nancy Oglesby, Vice President
- Erika Wittchen, Secretary
- Jim Greco, Treasurer

The election was held via a Zoom poll and an in-person show of hands. The above slate was approved unanimously.

President's Message

Carrie reflected on her past year as president, noting that a theme during the year was “Bee Unstoppable.” She said she heard that phrase in a talk about bees who are about to swarm. Once they decide to swarm, they are unstoppable.

OCBA was unstoppable, she noted, even during the pandemic year. Carrie said two events stood out in her mind. One was the ability to continue outreach via the Hillsborough Garden Tour, where OCBA sold many pollinator plants, generating funds to donate to the NC State Bee Laboratory. She thanked Dawn Rogers, Karen Lauterbach, Mike Scully, Jeanne Arnts, Lisa Vogel, and all the others who helped to make the event a success. The other event that illustrated OCBA’s “bee unstoppable” spirit was OCBA’s presence at the NC State Fair. OCBA won first place for the Sweepstake Award and second place for our booth. Carrie thanked the many people who made the booth possible, especially Celeste Meyer, Dawn Rogers, Seokyun Hong, Mary Ann Rhyne, Keith Glidewell, Loren Pease, Larry Arnold, and Ian Rasmussen. Carrie said she was proud of the 2021 cluster leaders, collaborative leaders, and others in leadership roles, like Keith Glidewell, who took over as webmaster. She also thanked the 2021 Board of Directors for being flexible and nimble.

Carrie also mentioned Randall Austin’s “Pay It Forward” article. She encouraged OCBA members to be thankful for those who have helped them with their beekeeping experience and to pay it forward by helping others in the beekeeping community.

Tim thanked Carrie for her leadership during a challenging year.

Apprentice Program

Vicki Robertson said her committee is currently working to select 2022 apprentices. She asked people interested in mentoring apprentices to contact her or Kent Robertson at kentvicki222@gmail.com.

Membership

Wayne Vanderberg reminded people it is time to renew their annual memberships. He said OCBA currently has 268 members.

Bee School

Carrie reported for Randall Austin that 31 people have currently enrolled for the 2022 Bee School, which can be attended either in-person or via Zoom.

Holiday Party

Tim said the 2021 Holiday Party will be on December 9. It will be a virtual event, with games, an auction, a contest, and prizes.

Door Prizes

Zoom Door Prize: Mark Powers, T-Shirt

In-Person Door Prizes: Chris Apple, hat; Norbert Brinkley - apiary yard sign