

# **Orange County Beekeepers Association**

## **Meeting Minutes**

**March 14, 2024**

Elisa Bailey, OCBA Vice-president, opened the meeting and welcomed everyone for the March meeting.

### **Hive Chat**

This month's topic of discussion was swarm traps, making splits, and when to put on honey supers - with OCBA member Brad Kosiba.

**What's in Bloom:** OCBA members provided photos of current blooms and bee forage plants. These included crocus, camellia, apple, hellebore, and deadnettle. Hollies are just starting to bloom, and the red maples are finishing up.

### **Presentations**

#### **2023 Youth Apprentice #2 – Minerva**

Kent and Vicki Robertson introduced the second OCBA Apprentice from 2023. They noted Minerva was very self-motivated – even before she officially became an apprentice, she attended OCBA events. Maribeth Hamilton also served as a mentor to Minerva.

Minerva presented a PowerPoint slideshow with many pictures documenting her year of beekeeping. Some highlights included making a split, learning how to mark queens, and getting her first small honey harvest (which she shared with family and friends)!

Minerva enjoyed sharing hive inspections with friends and family, and also thought beekeeping was a fun way to connect people with shared interests. Minerva participated in numerous club outreach events, including volunteering at Kidzu and presenting about bees to second graders, decorating the windows of Bailey Bee Supply for the holiday season, and helping at the NC State Fair NCSBA information booth.

#### **“Mental Health and Beekeeping (Is there a connection?)” – Nancy Rupert**

Nancy Rupert is a retired NC Apiary Inspector (11.5 years) and was also a Licensed Nurse Practitioner (family medicine in a rural setting). She has been a beekeeper for 24 years.

Nancy talked about some of the ways beekeeping could have a positive influence on mental health:

- Promoting mindfulness (working hives makes one very in-tune with the present)
- Allows a time out from negative thoughts
- For some, beekeeping is an altruistic endeavor
- Brings you closer to nature
- Can be a distraction from your problems
- Gives your mind a positive focus

However, Nancy also noted that beekeeping can be stressful, especially if you have unrealistic expectations, or if you lack knowledge and don't have a support system.

## **Club Business**

### **Volunteer Spotlight** (Elisa Bailey)

This month's volunteer spotlight is our OCBA Mentorship Directors:

- David Eckert (our 1<sup>st</sup> Mentorship Director)
- Lisa Vogel (2018-2020)
- Kent and Vicki Robertson (2020-2023)
- Jose Olmedo (current)

### **Updates from the Spring NCSBA Meeting**

- Kent Robertson briefed us on a few highlights from the meeting, including an update on invasive yellow hornets (colonies were discovered last August near Savannah, GA).

### **Call for Volunteers**

- Volunteers are needed for the following:
  - o Blackwood Farms Park cluster mentor
  - o Temporary Hive Care/Rehoming program leader
  - o State Fair booth
  - o Hillsborough Last Fridays events
  - o Hillsborough holiday parade – OCBA float

### **Membership**

- Leif reported we have 335 members, of which 111 still need to pay 2024 membership dues

### **Education/Bee School**

- Carrie provided an update: 88 people signed-up, 10 of these sign-ups occurred after the start--due to hybrid setup, attendees could catch up by watching prior recordings.

### **Outreach**

Jeanne Arnts:

- Passed around sign-up sheets for the following upcoming events
  - o Master Gardener Pollinator Day (Apr 14)
  - o Sunshine Lavender Farm (June events)

### **Next Month's Speaker**

Our fellow beekeeper and Master Gardener Mary Leonhardi will give a presentation on planting for pollinators. There will also be a plant swap!

*Erika Wittchen*

*OCBA Secretary*