

CITY COUNCIL

Dennis G. Hoffman, Mayor
Bruce T. Roundy, Vice Mayor
James Paschall, Sr.
Charles Gee
Salina Edwards

CITY OFFICIALS

Angela Crook
Assistant City Manager/City Clerk
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City Treasurer

CITY OF ORLAND

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



CITY MANAGER

Peter R. Carr

Orland: Queen Bee Capital of North America

(Orland, CA, May 4, 2017) – The City of Orland officially proclaimed itself as Queen Bee Capital of North America at its city council meeting here Monday night before a receptive crowd of industry representatives, Bee City USA Orland Committee members, chamber of commerce board members and residents.

The action follows and enhances Orland's decision March 7th to become America's 40th "Bee City USA®" affiliate.

Bee City Committee chair Terrie Barr led the request to the City Council, supported by several of the dozen local queen bee producers including Ray Olivarez, Jr. of Olivarez Honey Bees (OHB), Pat Heitkam of Heitkams' Honey Bees, and Brad Pankratz of Can-Am Apiaries. Heitkam is past president of the American Bee Federation. Olivarez, Heitkam and Pankratz are all past presidents of the California Bee Breeders Association. Heitkam and Pankratz are also past presidents of the California State Beekeepers Association.

Heitkam described annual local queen bee production numbers collectively approaching ½ million, shipped out from Orland nationwide and to many other countries, saying, "It's good Orland has this identity. There is a remarkable local culture here with family heritage and bee business people sharing helpful information with one another."

Pankratz, a third generation beekeeper, described with pride his family's legacy in queen bee cultivation. Barr reminded listeners, "We wouldn't be Queen Bee Capital without the hard work of our queen producers."

In his advance report to the city council, city manager Pete Carr explained the Queen Bee Capital proclamation "...recognizes an important industry while providing a source of regional pride and economic development opportunities."



Chamber of Commerce President Trish Saint-Evens agreed the queen bee identity is a great "brand" for Orland. Olivarez told the council and audience "We really think this could bring something good to the City of Orland and the County of Glenn."

Orland will join other Northern California communities with ag-tourism activities that are growing in popularity with out-of-town visitors who want to experience farm life and see where their food comes from.

Mayor Dennis Hoffman said, "Our City Council let it be known that we understand the importance of sustaining pollinators. We are stepping forward as the top-producing queen bee area. We are proud of the accomplishments of the local bee industry and its generations of family commitment."

The City of Orland established the Orland Bee City Committee in March as the lead facilitating group for Orland's efforts to engage the community in promoting pollinator-friendliness. Councilmember Salina Edwards, along with key industry and education representatives, serves on the committee. The committee staffed an outreach booth at the recent Hobby Day/Bee Festival at OHB in Orland attended by some 2000 visitors, and is planning a larger display for the Glenn County Fair in Orland later this month.

Bee City USA is a nonprofit national organization that fosters ongoing dialogue in urban areas to raise awareness of the role pollinators play in sustaining three-quarters of the world's plant species and what each of us can do to provide them with healthy habitat. Many local agricultural products, like almonds, are entirely dependent on bees for pollination.

For more information about the Bee City USA organization visit www.beecityusa.org or email Director Phyllis Stiles at beecityusa@gmail.com. For more information about the Orland Bee City USA program, contact Pete Carr at citymanager@cityoforland.com or (530) 865-1603.

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