



2018/19 ANNUAL REPORT

April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019

HIGHLIGHTS

- The Okanagan Basin Water Board provided OXA with an \$18,300 contract for 2018/19.
- OXA was successful with the City of Kelowna's Partners-in-Parks Grant Application and received \$10,000 for garden upgrades.
- The Xeriscape Plant Sale was a huge success thanks to OXA's garden's manager, Ali Lennie, and her fantastic volunteer team.
- Number of unique website visitors for the 2018 calendar year was 54,847.
- OXA in partnership with the Kelowna Fire Department conducted a mulch flammability test on August 30. Test mulches included: Natures Gold Regular, Natures Gold Premium, Ogogrow, Glengrow, Fir Bark and Pine Needles.
- OXA hosted Alfredo Unda from Chile July 11-16. Alfredo is a Forest Engineer with a Masters in Environmental Studies. He is a member of the Chilean chapter of 'Mediterranean Gardening International'.
- OXA became a member of 'Mediterranean Gardening International' group.
- Charitable status forms were filled, supporting documentation was gathered, and are now completed, ready for submission in year 2019.

REPORT DETAILS

2018/19 Board of Directors

- Judie Vergnano (Steeves), president
- Marion Barschel, vice-president
- Lisa Masini, secretary and co-founder
- Pat Lemche, treasurer
- Vanda Mallinson, director
- Sigrie Kendrick, director
- Melodie Lind, legal advisor (non-board member)

Contractors

- Gwen Steele, executive director and co-founder
- Eva Antonijevic, program director
- Alison Lennie, garden manager and volunteer co-ordinator
- Terry Short, administrative assistant

Finance

- Thank you to the Okanagan Basin Water Board (OBWB) for the base funding contract of \$18,300 to cover costs for presentations, promotion, website, newspaper column, and garden manager from April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019.
- The seventh annual fundraising spring plant-sale grossed \$9,013.
- See the financial statement for membership and class income.
- Membership in B.C. Council of Garden Clubs was renewed and their member volunteer and director's insurance was purchased.
- Application for OXA to request charitable status is ready for submission.
- All permanent records are stored at Pushor Mitchell Law offices.

Memberships

- Volunteer hours: 768
- Members: 107
- Constant Contact newsletter goes to over 800 email addresses
- Membership included a 10% discount on OXA classes and workshops and 10% discounts offered by six local nurseries and Sagebrush in Oliver, plus one free tour of the Okanagan Lavender Farm.
- 21 members attended the AGM, May 2018, in the Downtown Library meeting room.

unH2O Xeriscape Demonstration Garden

Garden Improvements

- OXA was successful with the City of Kelowna's Partners-in-Parks Grant Application and received \$10,000
- The funds were used to upgrade irrigation, create an alternative-lawn demonstration garden bed, a trees and shrub border, create and install interpretive signs and create and install a new **unH2O Demonstration Garden** entrance sign.
- ByLand Nursery donated plant material, which included the following plants: *Robinia pseudoacacia* 'Twisty Baby', *Euonymus fortuneii* 'Gold Splash' (2), *Euonymus alatus* (Burning Bush) (2), *Acer ginnala* (Amur maple).
- Three *Hibiscus syriacus* 'Blue Bird' were purchased from Dogwood Nursery in June and *Aster frikartii* were purchased in September from Summerland Ornamental Gardens. All plants are flourishing to date.
- The lower rockery bed was emptied of plant material April 13 with the help of the City of Kelowna Parks gardeners. The removed plant material was taken by Parks Staff, potted up for the OXA Plant Sale and relocated to the upper rockery bed. Stepping-stones and accent-stones were donated, delivered and installed by Eco Edge Landscape in April. Two yards of Natures Gold garden blend soil was added on April 21 ready for yarrow and elfin thyme planting. Planting was completed on May 17 in conjunction with the Make Water Work Mayors Challenge launch. The progress of this lawn alternative bed continues to be monitored with the camera provided by Miah Shull Olmsted and Alison Lennie's smart phone.
- Three yards of crushed gravel was placed to refresh the existing crush gravel area on Nov 19.

Irrigation

- Kelowna Parks staff worked with OXA's garden manager Alison Lennie to repair the unH2O irrigation system and provided parts.
- Discussion with Shauna Burnell (certified irrigation technician from WaterKind) to renovate the irrigation commenced Oct 11. Consideration was given to a "roll out" system (removable seasonally) in an attempt to reduce the damage that occurs to the drip lines during work in the garden. A design plan was completed by Shauna in November 2018 and a relationship was created between SiteOne Landscape Supply and OXA to implement Shauna's plan. Drip irrigation lines were purchased in the late fall of 2018 and remained in storage at Site One until removal of old lines and installation of new system commenced in late May 2019.
- Winter blow out and controller shut down was completed by Kelowna Parks staff on October 19.

Maintenance

- City of Kelowna supplied in-kind two-yards of GlenGrow mulch. OXA's volunteer Maureen Lisle picked it up from the landfill and volunteers applied it.
- Regular maintenance of the gardens and irrigation adjustments were made throughout the season.
- Work Parties with volunteers in 2018:
 - April 13 - spring clean-up, pruning, clean out of lower rockery, re-organization of upper rockery bed
 - April 21 - soil added to lower rockery bed
 - April 27 - weeding and mulching session
 - May 17 - lawn alternative bed planting (Yarrow, *Achillea millefolium*)
 - July 12 - summer clean up
 - Oct 19- first of two fall clean ups
 - Nov 21- second and final clean up
- Sandy Petitcherc (volunteer) monitored the number of OXA's *unH2O Demonstration Garden* brochures' box and kept it filled - 544 brochures were picked up in the garden. Another 300 were given out at classes, presentations, PR events, etc.

Plant sale 2018

- Gross Revenue from the Plant Sale 2018 was \$9,013.
- Thank you to Terry-Lynn and John Hemmerling for the use of their property for plant propagation for the 2018 plant sale.
- Thanks to Bowman Nurseries for the use of their thermal printer to print waterproof plant labels.
- Thanks to all the volunteers who assisted with propagation, preparations, P.R., tagging, hauling, set-up and plant sale day. Particular thanks to the Plant Sale Committee Volunteers: Sigrie Kendrick, Maureen Lisle and Sandy Petitcherc and to 'Friends of the Library' for the loan of scarves for volunteers
- The plant list was again posted several weeks in advance of the sale under the sale poster on OXA's website home page.
- Unsold plants were donated to the KGH Auxiliary Blossomtime Fair.
- Not-for profit organizations and vendors attending the Sale:
 - Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program (OCCP) with SeedsCo Community Conservation (Okanagan native seeds) - Tanis Gieselman
 - Border Free Bees - Nancy Holmes
 - Wild Bloom Nursery
 - Make Water Work, Okanagan WaterWise (OBWB)
 - Okanagan Master Gardeners

Free Xeriscape Presentations

2018

- May 24 - Presentation to grade 7 class at KLO to determine where and how to plant pollinator plants in the riparian area along Fascieux Creek on their school grounds
- May 25 – Presentation at the unH2O to two grade 5/6 classes from Glenmore Elementary talking about water conservation, xeriscape and xeric plant characteristics, plus guided tour of Thomson Marsh, identifying plants - native, invasive, etc.
- May 8 – Xeriscape presentation, RDNO, Vernon
- May 22 - OXA'S AGM presentation on Firesmart and Xeriscape landscaping, Kelowna
- May 26 – Irrigation and Landscape Info Session, City of Kelowna
- June 2 – Pollinator friendly gardening with Xeriscape plants, Friends of SOG, Summerland
- June 14 - Presentation/Tour of the unH2O Demo Garden
- June 16 – Xeriscape hands-on pruning class, Jeanette Merrick, Kelowna
- July 14 – Xeriscape pruning class, Jeanette Merrick, Kelowna
*Thank you to Jeanette Merrick of 'Trees for Life' who gave free pruning seminars in members' gardens and encouraged several people to join OXA.
- August 2 - Presentation/Tour of the unH2O Demo Garden
- Sept 28 - OXA partnered with St Andrews Anglican Church and OKM Students - Alison Lennie and Sigrie Kendrick with Josh Smith and Stephanie Aitken from XEN Nursery. Activities included division of drought tolerant perennials and transplanting these in the garden beds at the Church Cemetery.
- Sept 29 - Presentation/Tour of the unH2O Demo Garden
- Oct 19 – Workshop – hands-on fall Xeriscape garden clean up, unH2O Demonstration Garden
- Oct 24 – Xeriscape pruning class, Jeanette Merrick, Kelowna
- Nov 7 – QWEL Landscape & Irrigation Contractor Training, Sustainable Landscaping component, Kelowna

2019

- Jan 23 – Xeriscape presentation, SiteOne Landscape Supply, Kelowna
- Mar 4 – Building Climate Resilience in the Okanagan's Gardens, Seedy Sunday, Naramata
- Mar 18 – Xeriscape presentation, Canadian Federation of Women, Kelowna
- Mar 19 - Pollinator friendly gardening with Xeriscape plants, Princeton Gardening Club

OXA Xeriscape classes - partially funded through fees charged

- April 7, Kelowna, attended by 26 people
- April 28, Summerland, attended by 29 people
- Sept 29, Kelowna, attended by 9 people
- Oct 27, Penticton, attended by 12 people

Xeriscape promotion - media and community events

2018

- April 11 - OXA information booth Border Free Bees: Bee Ambassador Info Night, Okanagan Regional Library, Kelowna
- April 23 – on CBC Daybreak to promote OXA plant sale
- May 17 – xeriscape demonstration attended by valley-wide politicians and members of the press who attended the Make Water Work launch – Global TV filmed the event for a segment on the evening news. The event was also featured in the local newspaper.
- June – new information about OXA and xeriscape, with a link to OXA’s website, was added to City of Kelowna website along with a great photo of the unH2O Garden.
- June 16 – OXA information booth in a private xeriscape garden on the Kelowna Garden Tour
- July 14 - OXA information booth at Border Free Bees Pollinator Picnic in the Pollinator Pasture
- Sept - held a volunteer appreciation event
- Oct 12 – 14 – OXA information booth Border Free Bees - Bee Symposium in Kelowna

2019

- March 7 – OXA information booth OBWB World Water day
- May 10 – OXA information booth - Seedy Sunday, Kelowna

Newspaper Column

- 23 newspaper columns were published in the Capital News – print and digital select
- Several articles were also published in sister papers: Lake Country Calendar and Vernon Morning Star.
- Select columns were posted online through the Capital News website. Online columns were linked to OXA Facebook page.

Thank you to all who helped the Okanagan Xeriscape Association to have another successful year promoting the importance of water conservation by gardening with nature. Without you the organization could not exist!

Respectfully submitted,



Eva Antonijevic

Programs Director

Okanagan Xeriscape Association