

Okanagan Xeriscape Association
President's Report
for agm, Sept. 22, 2020

It's been a very hectic year for OXA—a year of change and a year of firsts, with lots of learning on everyone's part.

It became necessary for us to change website hosts, and at the same time we updated the website and then updated the logo as well. Both were adventures.

OXA enlarged its Kelowna demonstration garden to include what had been a city-maintained strip of property adjacent to the building behind the garden, which was planted in grasses. A strip of drought-tolerant trees and shrubs will be planted there instead.

After years of dedicated service, our treasurer, Pat Lemche, stepped down, and Mark Godlewski took on that role for OXA. OXA's very well-organized administrative assistant also moved on, and a new contractor was hired, Nicole Brown.

Another strategy session with consultant Jane Ritchie helped get OXA back on track after the previous year's retirement of executive-director Gwen Steele.

Stephanie Aitken joined the board as a new director early in 2020.

Work got underway on a board manual and a decision was made to move to stagger terms on the board so not everyone's term is up at the same time. That has not been finalized and implemented yet.

OXA finally received charitable status from the federal government, which opens up the potential for grants from new sources.

In March, the whole world was turned upside down by a global pandemic caused by the COVID-19 virus and everyone but those considered essential were sent home to live in relative isolation. Because public meetings were not permitted, the garden sale had to be postponed, and ultimately occurred later, largely online, with plant pickups.

OXA decided to prevent loss of the valuable Bluestem Nursery database of information on varieties of grasses, by hosting it for \$300 a year, for two years.

Although plant sale, presentations, classes and workshops all were postponed, the new website and logo designs were completed and went live this spring.

OXA's garden manager moved on and a new garden manager, Shannon King, was hired.

Spray irrigation installed in the demonstration garden was replaced with drip.

Discussions are underway for a new, smaller xeriscape demonstration garden in West Kelowna.

Judie Steeves,
president

