

OXA 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

HIGHLIGHTS

The OXA website has been completely updated and successfully migrated to the new server.

Despite the challenges presented by Covid 19 the first online Xeriscape Plant Sale was a success.

Work has begun on the Woodland Grove, the sixth garden at the Demonstration Garden and expands the garden footprint by 1,400 square feet. The expansion area will showcase xeric trees, shrubs, and cedar hedge alternatives.

Membership to the organization has more than doubled, an all-time high for OXA.

Two new flagstone pathways have been built to improve access to the garden, one showcasing sedum mats.

The number of website visits for the year was 10,700.

3 new, dynamic members have joined the OXA Board.

OXA continues to maintain both the Demonstration Garden and the City Hall Garden. Due to Covid restrictions OXA was not permitted access to the planters at the Wastewater Treatment facility.

The first lifetime Legacy Membership was presented to co-founder Gwen Steele.

The first OXA t-shirts were ordered.

The first online xeriscape class was filled quickly and received great reviews.

REPORT DETAILS

2021 Board of Directors:

Judie Steeves, president

Marion Barschel, vice-president

Mark Godlewski, treasurer

Vanda Mallinson, director

Joan Byrne, director

Lisa Masini, secretary and co-founder

Stephanie Aiken, director

Amanda Price, director

Jessica Hobden, director

Melodie Lind, legal advisor (non board member)

Contractors:

Sigrie Kendrick, executive director

Nicole Brown, administrative assistant

Claire Turner, web design

FINANCE

The annual spring plant sale grossed \$7947.55.

Membership in B.C. Council of Garden Clubs was renewed, and their member, volunteer, and director's insurance were purchased.

All permanent records continue to be stored at Pushor Mitchell Law offices.

MEMBERSHIPS

Membership has more than doubled over the year previous and is a record for the organization, Covid restrictions limited member volunteer opportunities.

Membership includes access to the new Members Only feature on the website, at least a 10% discount on OXA classes and workshops, discounts at local nurseries, membership to Mediterranean Gardening International, free admission to members-only events and early access to the plant sale.

The AGM was held September 2020 with the minutes posted to the website. Due to a serious car accident Sigrie was not in attendance.

Nicole continues to use Constant Contact for all OXA communications and for managing OXA's email lists.

Due to Covid restrictions OXA was unable to hold the annual volunteer appreciation event.

Due to Covid restrictions most free events for OXA members were cancelled.

UNH2O XERISCAPE DEMONSTRATION GARDEN

Spring 2021

Derrick (Kelowna Parks Department) did start-up and blow out of irrigation.

ProSource Irrigation supplied discounted irrigation parts necessary to irrigate the new expansion area.

Sigrie and Seed and Sparrow built and installed the flagstone path and planted the sedum mats purchased from Nat's Mats.

Elmer from Arrowleaf Landscaping installed the flagstone in the expansion area, thank you.

Sigrie and Shannon did regular maintenance on the gardens and irrigation adjustments as needed.

Sandy P. (volunteer) once again tracked brochures, kept the brochure box filled, was our 'neighbourhood eyes on the garden' and frequently assisted Shannon and Sigrie.

Seeds were collected during fall clean-up and were packaged and distributed to Master Gardeners and at Seedy Sunday.

Thanks to Dogwood Nursery for the discount offered on the trees for the expansion area.

Volunteers, board members, and contractors prepared and planted 6 trees in the expansion area. Seed and Sparrow, Microbe Tree Services and Jeanette Merrick with T.R.E.E.S also participated, thanks to all involved.

PLANT SALE 2021

Thank you to Joan Byrne for letting us use her property on Old Vernon Road for propagation and growing-on of plants for the 2020 and 2021 season.

Thanks to Bowman Nurseries for supplying plant plugs purchased from Paridon Horticultural Ltd, thereby allowing OXA to offer a different selection of plants for sale from years previous.

Due to Covid restriction this year's plant sale was held entirely online, a first for the organization.

The plant sale was run through Shopify and presented a host of challenges which were met readily by Nicole and Claire.

OXA members were offered the benefit of a pre-sale prior to opening the sale to the general public, a decision which saw a significant increase in membership.

With Covid protocols in place it was decided to extend the pick-up day from 9-3 on May 8 to avoid congestion on site.

Joan from Wild Bloom Nursery had plants available for sale on pick-up day and once again shared commission from her sales with OXA.

Gross income was \$7947.55

A huge thank you to volunteers and the plant sale committee.

XERISCAPE CLASSES FOR HOMEOWNERS

Sigrie presented 'An Introduction to Xeriscape' via Zoom to 25 registered attendees.

Sigrie presented 'The 7 Principles of Xeriscape' to the Kelowna Garden Club via Zoom, 39 individuals were in attendance.

Following strict Covid guidelines Sigrie presented the 'Sustainable Landscape' portion in-person for the City of Kelowna's QWEL program.

Sigrie presented 'An Introduction to Xeriscape' via Zoom to the Kelowna Newcomers Alumni, 32 individuals attended.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

Due to the Covid restrictions put in place by the BC Health Authority there were no public presentations, Sigrie has however done 16 site inspections for both homeowners and stratas discussing xeric installations and conversions, all in strict adherence to Covid guidelines.

WEBSITE

The website update and migration to Opalstack is complete.

The website has been made more mobile friendly and the load time has been significantly improved.

The number of unique website visitors for the 2021 calendar year saw an increase over the previous year, with a total of 10,700 visits.

The website committee continues to determine priorities and direction for the site, with Sigrie, Mark, Vanda, Joan, Jessica, and Amanda contributing.

"On the Dry Side", the newly created Blog section now features 19 entries submitted by Sigrie, Mark, Gwen, and Vanda.

The Plant of the Month feature was added to the website.

The plant database is in the process of being completely updated.

OXA has launched a newsletter, published quarterly, aimed to engage, inform and educate.

* Xeric plant pictures were updated, contributed by Sigrie, Judie, Mark, and Claire.

COLLABORATIONS

OXA collaborated with Okanagan College and Marion Barschel to produce a tree planting video to be used for the College's Horticultural class and posted to the OXA website.

OXA collaborated with Seed and Sparrow for the creation of the pollinator garden at the Laurel Packinghouse.

OXA collaborated with Chuck Cullen (Team Construction) on a xeric and native memorial learning annex at Pearson Rd. Elementary.

OXA is in the process of collaborating with Gallaghers Canyon on a xeriscape conversion for their Town Centre.

OXA is in the process of initiating a collaboration with the City of West Kelowna on a new Demonstration Garden.

OXA is in collaboration with the strata at Englewood, Vernon to complete a xeric conversion to their public spaces.

MAKE WATER WORK

Sigrie continues to regularly visit garden centres in Kelowna and West Kelowna to promote the MWW campaign and talk with owners/managers to create awareness of OXA and our plant database.

OXA updated MWW signage at the Demonstration Garden.

Sigrie promoted the MWW campaign on the AM 1150 Garden Show.

Shannon distributed MMW literature to Byland's.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Shannon and Sigrie attended Seedy Sunday March 2021 with native and xeric seeds packaged by Sigrie and Rachael (Volunteer) which were then distributed via drive-by.

Sigrie volunteers weekly during the season with the Master Gardeners at Guisachan, promoting Xeriscape and OXA to Master Gardeners, the Parks Department, and the public.

MEDIA OUTREACH

Sigrie was a guest on the AM 1150 Garden Show promoting Xeriscape, thank you Don Burnett and Ken Salvail.

Sigrie wrote monthly 'Gardening with Nature' columns with accompanying photos for Kelowna Capital News, West Kelowna News, and Lake Country Calendar. Thank you to all involved for publishing them.

Columns were also featured in the Capital News online edition.

Sigrie wrote a newsletter featuring 'An Introduction to Xeriscape' for BC Communities in Bloom.

Shannon posted regularly to OXA's Facebook and Instagram accounts.

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,

Sigrie Kendrick

Executive-Director

Okanagan Xeriscape Association

