

news

UNH2O XERISCAPE GARDEN

Gardening tips will be offered

I would like to invite our readers to join me at 6:30 p.m., Tuesday, May 17, for a free presentation in the unH2O Xeriscape Demonstration Garden, located in front of the H2O Aquatic and Fitness Centre at 4075 Gordon Dr. in the Mission.

The garden is now full of colourful flowers.

On Tuesday, I will be talking about the attributes of plants that are in bloom in the five theme gardens and

Gardening With Nature

GWEN STEELE



giving a few tips on plant maintenance.

The theme gardens were created to help gardeners visualize plant groupings they can use at home.

Plants have been chosen for long bloom

and/or attractive foliage.

The native and rock gardens do not get watered.

The Mediterranean garden is irrigated as needed during prolonged summer heat.

The butterfly and ornamental grass gardens get regular irrigation during hot, dry weather.

I'll also give an overview of the xeriscape method of gardening and

the benefits of following the Seven Principles of Xeriscape.

The unH2O Garden was created in 2010 by volunteers and by donations of materials, labour and equipment from the horticultural industry.

Financial support was given by the Okanagan Basin Water Board, the Government of Canada through the Department of the Environment, and the City of Kelowna.



Alpine Marguerite daisy and Russian stonecrop blooming beneath the Make Water Work sign in the unH2O Rock Garden.

GWEN STEELE/CONTRIBUTED

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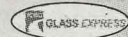
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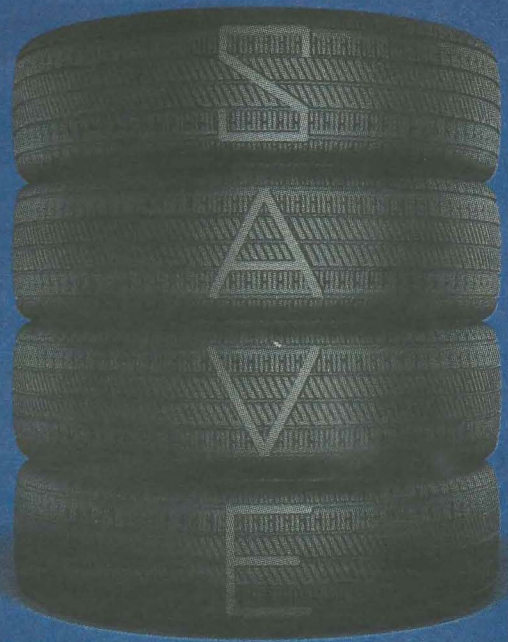
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Now entering its seventh season, the garden is maintained by OXA member volunteers under the direction of the OXA garden manager.

I look forward to meeting everyone on Tuesday evening at the garden. Bring your camera to record the plants you want to get for your landscape.

We will have OXA memberships (\$25) available and my favourite xeriscape gardening book, *Creating the Prairie Xeriscape*, by Sara Williams (\$35).

If you can't attend, pick

up a garden brochure (containing the list of plants in each garden) from the box beside the main garden sign.

Plants are labelled to help you identify varieties you might want to grow.

Check our website okanaganxeriscape.org for slide shows of the colourful gardens, the story of building the garden, and a copy of the garden brochure.

I encourage you to visit the gardens often to see the ever-changing and colourful display that continues until autumn frosts.

On Wednesday, the garden was on display for the launch of the Mayor's Make Water Work challenge.

The challenge is to be the municipality with the highest percentage of residents signing up to take the pledge to reduce their outdoor water use this season.

Everyone taking the pledge is eligible for incentive prizes.

This is the sixth year of the Make Water Work program.

Last year, the pilot project of a new initiative was launched to promote a selection of water-wise plants that grow well in the Okanagan.

This year the plant selection has doubled and nine Okanagan garden centres are participating.

Visit the website makewaterwork.ca for the plant list, participating garden centres and to take the pledge.

Tickets for the Kelowna Flower Power Garden tour on June 18, are on sale now.

See flowerpowerylw.ca for more details.

Gwen Steele is executive director of the non-profit Okanagan Xeriscape Association.

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