

President's report Oct. 16, 2021.

Russell and district horticultural society

The year 2021

It was another challenging year, and I found that not being able to meet in person makes it somewhat difficult to maintain a vibrant and exciting program. As I look back over the year's activities and accomplishments, I see that we were active and busy in carrying out our objectives.

1. We continued sending out informative monthly newsletters in Jan., Feb., March, April, May and Sept. We generated excitement by choosing a topic, drawing a name and offering prizes for the winner's submission.
2. We hosted virtual meetings with guest speakers: in March (winter seeding by Lia Lindeman), April (growing microgreen sprouts by Jennifer Glen), May (growing herbs and edible flowers by Nancy McDonald). Our Oct. topic will be monarch butterflies by Christina Enright.
3. A day trip to learn about the monarch butterflies plus a visit to Stonecrop Acres Vineyard was planned and enjoyed.
4. Several workshops were much appreciated: cement pumpkins, rudbeckia garden stakes, and fall floral arrangement workshop.
5. We organized several fundraisers. In the spring we sold 12 birdhouses at \$35. each, made from repurposed lumber coming off the Russell Museum. We also hosted a truckload rain barrel sale and earned \$1750.
6. We had an active junior program again this year. There were 18 children signed up. Native pollinator plants were ordered through Ferguson tree nursery and distributed. Their virtual show/competition is in the works. Pictures will be judged and prizes awarded.
7. We applied for and received a tree planting grant from the OHA. A serviceberry was bought and working with the Russell historical society, planted on museum property.
8. Our society continues to maintain the Children's Fantasy Reading Garden at the library and the plantings at MacDougall Park. Members assisted with spreading mulch at the reading garden and our sign at the park was renovated. A commemorative tree was planted in the park to honour Pat Stachon.
9. As president, I attended the virtual OHA convention and AGM. I've enjoyed most of the tours offered and look forward to listening to the speakers when my gardens have been put to bed.
10. We have an ongoing tree nursery maintained by two members. Additional seedlings were planted and just recently they sold 28 small trees.
11. Flowerboxes at Russell Meadows, our local seniors' residence, were planted. Bursaries were given to two students at the local high schools. Members volunteered at a local community garden.
12. Paying for memberships using e-transfer was introduced. A virtual ticket, that can be copied, is sent in response. Memberships are at approximately 75 individuals for this year.
13. A virtual sunflower show was organized, promoted and received entries. We will be able to vote for our favourite entries, online at the upcoming virtual meeting. Gift certificates to Beyond the House, a local nursery and great supporter of the society, will be awarded.

14. Our AGM is planned for November and we have a hall available, hoping to meet in person.

15. We try hard to stay connected with each other. Planning as a board is done largely via emails. We have a great website and Facebook page for all members to access, to know what's happening and to be informed.

Submitted by Grace Stapper, president