

# THE OKRA NEWS

OKLAHOMA RECYCLING ASSOCIATION

August 2020

Welcome to the OKRA online newsletter. Please feel free to share our newsletter with anyone who might enjoy reading it. To receive electronic notification of newsletter availability and general recycling announcements, sign-up for the OKRA listserv: [www.recycleok.org/get involved](http://www.recycleok.org/get-involved)

## Broken Arrow Launches Curbside Recycling

The City of Broken Arrow is excited to announce the launch of a curbside recycling program this fall. In early October, service to more than 35,000 customers will begin, with all residents utilizing a trash cart, and having the option to begin recycling curbside. Previously, all Broken Arrow refuse was placed in one-time use bags, and left on the curb. The new system will introduce carts for trash, and the first opportunity for Broken Arrowians to recycle at the curb.

For years, BA residents have had to transport their recyclables to a second location to be pro-



cessed, but with the new system, they are able to place all eligible items into the recycling cart. The City believes this will help raise the recycling rate for citizens, and will encourage residents to be more conscientious about their waste production.

### THANK YOU FOR RECYCLING THESE:

Paper



Mixed Paper, Newspaper, Magazines, and Flattened Cardboard

Cartons



Food and Beverage Cartons  
empty and replace cap

Glass



Bottles and Jars  
empty and rinse

Cans



Aluminum and Steel Cans  
empty and rinse

Plastic Containers



Kitchen, Laundry, Bath: Bottles and Containers  
empty and replace cap

**NO!** Reduce contamination and keep these out of the blue cart!



No Styrofoam  
(cartons, cups, trays, or packaging)



Do Not Bag Recyclables  
No Garbage Bags



No Plastic Bags or Plastic Wrap  
(return to retail)



No Food or Liquid  
(empty all containers)



No Clothing or Linens  
(use donation programs)



No Tangles  
(no hoses, wires, chains, or electronics)

(918) 258-3587

RecycleBA.com

Broken Arrow's efforts are supported by the Recycling Partnership, which offers funding to secure carts, as well as in-kind design and education technical assistance. Carts will be delivered to homes in late September, and the program should be in full swing by mid fall.

By Mackenzie Jones, Recycling Outreach Coordinator

## Staying Green in Quarantine!

Announcing the 2020 Oklahoma Recycling Association Annual Recycling Conference

OKRA Virtual Recycling Conference

October 7-8, 2020

The conference will feature keynote addresses "Recycling Markets in the Pandemic: Crisis or Opportunity?" and "Extended Producer Responsibility"

For details, see complete article on page 3

## Every Bottle Back Invests in Broken Arrow Curbside Recycling - FAQs

### What investment is the *Every Bottle Back* initiative making in the city of Broken Arrow, Okla.?

*Every Bottle Back* is investing \$390,500 to help the city launch a new curbside recycling program by providing 35,000 households with access to curbside carts and recycling education materials.

### How will Broken Arrow benefit from the *Every Bottle Back* initiative?

Currently, residents of Broken Arrow do not have access to curbside recycling which means valuable recyclable materials are being landfilled instead of collected and remade into new products. There is a robust market for sustainable products in the region. Broken Arrow's *Every Bottle Back* investment will yield 124 million pounds of recyclable materials over 10 years. More than three-quarters of the recyclable materials collected over this time will be aluminum and polyethylene terephthalate (PET), which the beverage industry uses to make its 100% recyclable plastic bottles. After materials are collected and sorted, they will be sold to consumer brands and manufacturers across the region so they can be remade into new bottles or other consumer products.

Broken Arrow's *Every Bottle Back* investment will help fund a new recycling program for residents, provide

35,000 households with access to convenient curbside recycling carts and support the circular plastics economy by jump starting the collection of 100% recyclable beverage bottles in Broken Arrow so they can be remade into new bottles, as intended.

### What is the *Every Bottle Back* initiative?

*Every Bottle Back* is an integrated and comprehensive initiative launched by America's leading beverage companies – *The Coca-Cola Company*, *Keurig Dr Pepper* and *PepsiCo* – to reduce the industry's use of new plastic by partnering with the environmental and sustainability leaders the *World Wildlife Fund*, *Closed Loop Partners*, and *The Recycling Partnership*.

### What is the goal of the *Every Bottle Back* initiative?

*Every Bottle Back* is a sustained effort to reclaim our plastic bottles so they can be remade into new bottles and not end up as waste in oceans, rivers or landfills. We are reinforcing the value of our 100% recyclable bottles and caps to consumers, making significant investments to support the circular plastics economy to improve the collection of our plastic bottles and increase the amount of recycled plastic available to be remade into beverage bottles.

**Visit [EveryBottleBack.org](http://EveryBottleBack.org) for more information on how to get involved!**

## MCN Celebrates Every Day as Earth Day

by Kristy Lawson

On July 2, the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Office of Environmental Services held a curbside recycling event celebrating every day as Earth Day. Following COVID-19, the MCN Green Team did some careful planning to re-organize the original two-day event scheduled for Earth Day (April 22) into a curbside recycling event at the MCN Recycle Center in Okmulgee. The event offered different services including free curbside document shredding and electronic recycling. The Green Team accepted a variety of items including TVs, monitors, cell phones, small appliances, white goods (washers, dryers, and stoves), automobile batteries, alkaline batteries, tires, cardboard, paper, plastic bottles, and aluminum cans.

Shredders Inc. provided free curbside document shredding which generated 12,285 pounds of shredded documents. Natural Evolutions Inc. helped to recycle 7,322 pounds of e-waste collected. The Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality helped to recycle 180 tires collected at the event. James Williams, the Director of Environmental Services, was concerned with the event being held so close to a holiday weekend, however the curbside recycling event turned out to be the biggest event we have ever had at the Recycle Center. Each participant in the event received a free 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Earth Day T-shirt and a chance to win a drawing for handmade crates made by our wonderful MCN OES staff.

The MCN's next event to celebrate National Recycle Day (Nov. 15) is scheduled for Friday, November 13 at the MCN Recycle Center. Please call the MCN Office of Environmental Services at 918-549-2580 with any questions, requests for more events, or ideas on how to make every day Earth Day.



# **“Staying Green in Quarantine!”**

## Oklahoma Recycling Association Annual Recycling Conference

**We hope you  
can join us!**

Make plans now to attend the Oklahoma Recycling Association’s first ever virtual conference on Wednesday, October 7<sup>th</sup> and Thursday, October 8<sup>th</sup>!

The sessions will start Wednesday afternoon, and continue Thursday morning, until adjourning at 12:30 p.m.

Internationally known speaker, Chaz Miller, former Director of Policy & Advocacy for the National Waste and Recycling Association, will deliver Wednesday’s keynote address, “Recycling Markets in the Pandemic: Crisis or Opportunity?” President of the Global Product Stewardship Council and Chief Executive Officer and Founder of the Product Stewardship Institute, Scott Cassel, MCP, will deliver the keynote address Thursday on Extended Producer Responsibility.

Other conference topics include Municipal Challenges During and After COVID-19, Market Updates, and Glass Recycling. There will be opportunities to talk with experts in four different roundtable discussions (breakout rooms) on Food Waste, Batteries, E-waste and Glass. Conference attendees will have the ability to participate in two different round tables.

More information will be released soon regarding the program, an after-hours networking session, and registration details. Check [OKRA’s 2020 Conference](#) webpage for updates.

Attendees may register for one or both days. Registration for OKRA Members is \$10 per day. For non-members, registration is \$20 a day. This year OKRA will have a new category for teachers and classrooms to participate. A group (class) rate will be available for \$15 a day.

This event has support from the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality, the Chickasaw Nation and the Indian Nations Chapter of SWANA. Additional support is welcomed! For support level information, please contact [info@recycleok.org](mailto:info@recycleok.org).

## **New Digital Recycling Directory (Cell Phone Friendly)**

We are very excited to announce the launch of a new comprehensive digital recycling directory, **RecycleThis-Tulsa**. You can reach the directory at [recyclethis-tulsa.com](http://recyclethis-tulsa.com). The M.e.t. wanted to make it easier for Tulsa area residents to find a wide variety of recycling options near them. Our goal with this new web-based application is to make recycling easier for our community. RecycleThisTulsa allows citizens to quickly find where they can recycle various items on their computer or mobile phone by using a search bar. It even allows the user to place a link on a cell phone’s Home Page, just like a mobile app, while still allowing M.e.t. staff to keep the data current. RecycleThisTulsa also offers information on curbside recycling in M.e.t. communities as well as other environmental resources. We would like to thank the University of Tulsa’s Adjunct Professor, Ryan Haight, and his Computer Information Systems student for turning this vision into reality! Give it a try and let us know what you think.

Bailey Veal  
Intern, the M.e.t





# Owasso's Green Teens Offer Recycling Services

Greetings green friends! Thank you for taking time to read about some amazing folks that we happened to come across in Owasso, Oklahoma who are making a mighty big environmental impact, and are a shining example that age has no bearing on the type of environmental impact you can make. I'm always inspired when I hear about local stories of people right here in Oklahoma making a difference in their communities, being the change they wish to see in the world.

Jake Sherman, along with his teenage children Sydney and Seth, started their curbside recycling company, Green Teens, based in Owasso, Oklahoma, six years ago and it has since grown bigger than anyone could imagine. Jake first had the idea to not only teach his children responsibility, but also allow them to earn extra money, while doing something to make a positive environmental difference. He purchased all of the supplies himself and the brother and sister duo operated the entire company themselves. The Sherman's thought was that their service offered the perfect solution to the recycling issue faced in Owasso. They provided their own version of curbside recycling because the city of Owasso did not offer curbside recycling, but many people in the city had expressed a desire to be able to recycle more conveniently. The Green Teens program made it easy for the residents to participate in recycling.

Traditionally the residents would have to sort and drop off their recycling at their local recycling dumpsters located at school sites, but with the Sherman's service that task was provided for them. In reality their service not only created a cleaner stream of recycling, but also cut down on the amount of emissions from vehicles going to and from the various school recycling dumpsters.



Sydney and Seth have been so sought after for their services since the inception of their business that what started out as two siblings collecting curbside recycling is today a legitimate company operating under the name Green

Teens. You can visit their website to request quotes if you live in the areas serviced, which I have no doubt will continue to expand. They have also recently received a grant of \$10,000 from the ever-sustainable minded PepsiCo Recycling, so that they can continue to operate, having grown to 130 customers and now servicing Owasso, Verdigris and Collinsville. The expansion of the Sherman's business will allow them to divert an additional 23 tons of material from landfills annually, which is no small feat considering this is still a small family business of three! The siblings are responsible for sorting and dropping off all items collected. They have even created a document to help customers understand what can and cannot be recycled, as well as the options available for recycling various items in their area. I mean can you say local Captain Planets or what? To celebrate the well-earned grant, the Shermans will waive the \$60 sign-up fee for 150 new residential customers. A few bonus points also go to the fact that unlike traditional curbside programs that operate once a week the Sherman's run routes twice weekly and have recently upgraded by replacing bags with bins and cans for the customers along their routes. They have also invested in a new vehicle and a utility trailer, which was done with the money provided in part by the PepsiCo Recycling grant.

Six years ago, Jake Sherman and his two teenage children, Sydney and Seth started out wanting to create a small change for their community by providing a more readily accessible means of recycling. They de-

## Green Teens (cont.)

cided to start their own recycling business and it has since grown into an exceedingly in-demand, booming business. Their story stands as a reminder that neither manpower, age, nor funding can stand between someone starting and succeeding at something that they are passionate about. The Sherman's success is because of hard work, passion, and discipline. Through their environmental efforts these young people are giving many others the opportunity to make their own environmental impact. I'll leave you here green friends, until next time; Reduce, Reuse, Recycle!

To learn more about Green Teens Curbside Recycling and obtain a copy of their recycling guide, visit their website [owassorecycling.com](http://owassorecycling.com) or call 918-235-7602.

KOB's Very own Blog Contributor,

Shavara J.

Reference:

[www.owassorecycling.com](http://www.owassorecycling.com)



## 2020 OK COMPOST CONFERENCE VIRTUAL SERIES



### SCALING THE COMPOST MOUNTAIN OCT. 1, 15, 22, 29

The Oklahoma Compost Conference brings together local communities and compost experts to discuss, share knowledge, and raise awareness on the benefits of composting. Since the conference began in 2015, attendees have included local governments, municipalities, construction companies, solid waste companies, consulting firms, and students.

Mark your calendars for the 2020 virtual conference series and find more information on the OK Compost Conference <https://www.okcompostconference.org/>.

## Glass Recycling Coalition Seeks Input for Third Annual Survey

The Glass Recycling Coalition (GRC) is calling on haulers, material recovery facilities (MRFs), community program managers, glass processors, and manufacturers to weigh in on glass recovery efforts before the September 1 deadline. The annual survey collects aggregate data on types of glass collection programs, motivation for glass recycling, and challenges in community recycling programs.



**GLASS RECYCLING  
COALITION**

“We realize that glass recycling opportunities may look different in varying parts of the U.S.,” said Scott DeFife of the Glass Packaging Institute and GRC Leadership Committee. “GRC has been proactively working with communities to overcome barriers regionally, and this survey is another way we connect across the recycling value chain to identify issues and best practices throughout the country.”

The survey data collected are compared to previous years' surveys and provide a real-time attitudinal snapshot of how glass is currently recycled and helps to inform the direction of future GRC efforts.

The survey is conducted online and managed by Resource Recycling Systems (RRS). Respondents will be asked to provide basic identification information like type of organization; specific contact information will not be included in the survey report. The survey report will be published and shared publicly later this year.

Interested participants can access the survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/GlassSurvey20>.

# OKRA's 2020 Corporate Members

## Corporate Platinum Member



## Corporate Gold Member



## Corporate Silver Members



## Corporate Bronze Members



Natural Evolution, Inc.



An Electronics Recycling Company

## Passionate about Oklahoma Recycling, but not yet an OKRA Member?

Join our network of Oklahomans working to improve recycling across the state! As an OKRA member, you have contact with Oklahoma businesses and governments that are recycling in Oklahoma. Sharing information and resources helps grow Oklahoma's recycling programs and industries.

OKRA members receive a discount to the annual conference, recognition on the OKRA webpage (for corporate, government and non profit members) and newsletter, and an annual membership directory.

To join, or for more info, go to: [www.recycleok.org](http://www.recycleok.org), or contact Ellen Bussert at [okra.secretary@gmail.com](mailto:okra.secretary@gmail.com)



Highlight your 2020 recycling events  
in the OKRA News!

Send photos and articles to [trudi.logan@us.af.mil](mailto:trudi.logan@us.af.mil)  
to submit for an upcoming edition!