

THE OKRA OKLAHOMA RECYCLING ASSOCIATION NEWS

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 on our website www.recycleok.org/get-involved

Get to Know OKRA's New Board President Megan Waters



Greetings from the President of OKRA 2023!

I am also the executive director of Keep McAlester Beautiful. That's me in the center of the picture, hat, dark glasses, with some of our volunteers after a recent successful brush clean in McAlester. Keep McAlester Beautiful doesn't run the recycling center in McAlester, but we do promote it. KMB is the reason McAlester has recycling at all.

Personally, I enjoy getting to talk to people about recycling. Encouraging people who are interested, but don't know how to start recycling is fun! I ask people to start with one item (like plastic drinking bottles or aluminum pop cans) and learn how to do it right. I talk to people about contamination. I believe most folks who bring items to the recycling center (we have drop off only in McAlester at this time) want to do it correctly, and many don't know how. It's amazing what a little rinse out can do.

I believe the role of the Oklahoma Recycling Association is resources and networking. You have a commodity and no one to purchase it? We know a guy. You want recycling educational materials suitable for grade school? We should be able to set you up with sources. Need to expand composting in your area? We can help. That's what I see as the goal and future of OKRA. Now let's get busy.

Save the Date for OKRA's Next Lunch & Learn



"A Recycling Slam Dunk, without the Junk"

Learn more about how curbside bin audits can lower contamination. This virtual event will take place on February 15, 2023 at Noon CST. Stay tuned for registration info to come.

Republic Services conducted an audit with the City of Midwest City for their Super Recycler Program. A surprise waste audit is done of the recycling bins. Tags are put on the recycling bins if there is a problem with what is in the container or suggestions for improvement (like tear down the cardboard boxes.) If it is perfect, they are designated as a Super Recycler. Republic Services will give them \$25.00.

This competition happens during the first 2 weeks of October. This exercise helps the City of Midwest City clean up its recycling program.



Picture left to right; Sara Ivey, Oklahoma Green Schools Program Executive Director & Crystal Bennett, Municipal Manager Republic Services



OKRA Board Member Paul Streets, Midwest City City Public Works Director, and City Councilman Rick Favors



Pictured left to right Jerry Summers, MWC Solid Waste Supervisor, Carrie Evenson, MWC Assistant Public Works Director, Crystal Bennett

Sustain Salon on Their Low Waste Efforts

By Taylor Heydman

Sustain Salon, where the “Beauty Industry , recycling and composting all collide”

After doing hair & hair related services for over a decade, Mazey Heydman started her business in the up & coming neighborhood of Metro Park where, she turned a 100 year old optometrist office & house into a salon that’s been prospering since late August of 2018.

Since then, Sustain Salon has inspired many of the minds of it’s guests as well as other beauty salon professionals in the area. Just like the thought she puts into her clients, she had more than an image in mind for her salon. The entirety of the brand would involve the mission of minimizing the environmental impacts of the everyday salon. When talking about her own industry, she admits "it’s one of the largest offenders of our planet, and that a lot of the beauty industry’s waste-stream go unchecked."

Being a licensed cosmetologist for 15 years and being hands on in the salon, gave Mazey the experience she needed to find new solutions to the extreme amounts of waste she was creating on a daily basis. These solutions include everything from eliminating plastics, proper disposal of excess chemicals, using refillable, low-tox professional salon and cleaning products to using other waste diversion programs. These companies used in junction with the efforts of Mazey herself include Terracycle, a third-party company that recycles on the commercial level, EcoHeads for water purification and energy saving, and using locally purchased, bulk & non-toxic cleaning solutions from Plenty Mercantile’s refill station, and recycling services from Green Circles Salons as well.

Using her knowledge of salon sustainability, Mazey is now providing eco-salon consulting services to other salon industry professionals & provides personalized recycling programs to help collect salon waste.

Some other current practices Sustain Salon uses, range from composting the hair that’s cut with the local Fertile Grounds Co-op, to selling Argri Cosmetics. As a result, Sustain Salon (LLC) recycles and composts over 95% of it’s waste that would not otherwise be recycled.

If you are a beauty industry professional who is interested in a eco-salon consult, visit SustainableMazey.com for more information and resources to help you get started.



Pictured: Mazey Heydman
Owner & Hair Artist Sustain Salon



Pollution and the Power of sUstainability

By Patrick T. Hayes

I have lived in this area for nearly two decades. Some of this time was spent as a student, other times I would be a teacher. I've been vulnerable and empty-handed, and I've been flushed with gifts and gratitude. What didn't change is my ability of observation and reason regarding the intersection of our built world and natural environment.

In the last months of 2022, we led students in area elementary schools in a litter clean-up excursion around the grounds. Giddy faces and sharp minds, the kids would chase down the smallest litter items. Chain-linked fences on the borders of property are notorious for collecting litter, our students notice the gross collection of trash. They often wonder how such a mess came to be, and why someone would do that. These students take the litter personally.

Now challenge yourself to answer the questions our students raised. Will you lean on littering being accidental or unintentional? Will you point your finger at dumpsters overflowing, the cigarette smoker driving, or an inconsiderate pedestrian? The truth lies here somewhere, and our youngest generation is calling us out.

The power of us individuals to lead by example in litter mitigation is a positive action in the face of a daunting, perilous challenge. Many outdoor enthusiasts could keep a litter pack with their gear, comprising of a few plastic grocery bags and gloves stuffed into a medicine container. Take ownership of your neighborhood and refuse to let trash accumulate by making a weekly check. Support those organizations already doing the work by volunteering and contributing financially.

We have the capability to incorporate sustainability by bridging the separation between our natural environment and built world. When we provide remedies for the ailments of our ecosystem, all may win. When we incorporate our adaptive abilities as individuals in a community, all may benefit. This generation and the next will no longer ask why there's garbage in the playground when we find the power of us, together.



Above: Students race to find the ever-present litter while I chase behind with a bag.

Below: No litter is too little to pass picking up with the trash-grabber.



Chickasaw Nation Departments Work Together for the Environment

By Jarrod Presely

To celebrate America Recycles Day on Nov. 15, 2022, the Chickasaw Nation hosted a recycling event and trash cleanup. Employees from the Commerce Environmental Health and Safety team addressed an area of highway west of Ada. Their efforts removed 35 large bags of trash from the roadside and medians.

On Friday, groups from the Department of Commerce and the Department of Community Services worked together to host a Chickasaw Nation recycling event.

This event proved to be the one of the most successful recycling events in the Chickasaw Nation to date. Gathering over 10,000 lbs. of paper, more than 100 tires and a trailer load of cardboard, this event diverted thousands of pounds of material from the landfill.

The next Chickasaw Recycling event will be held in April during Earth Week.



the
**Chickasaw
Nation**

Keep McAlester Beautiful Closing 2022 Out With a Successful Cleanup

By Megan Waters

Keep McAlester Beautiful just completed their fall cleanup 2022. The first two weekends of October, McAlester saw almost 500 vehicles bring their bulk trash, tires, e-waste and metal to McAlester Recycling Center. Numbers are still coming in, but we recycled more than 650 tires and 12,500 pounds of electronic waste. Citizens also took 12,764 lbs of brush to the city landfill that will be chipped up for later use. All the metal is separated and taken to two local scrap yards.

Traditionally, Keep McAlester Beautiful holds two cleanups a year, one in April for three weekends, and the fall cleanup consisting of two weekends. McAlesterites utilize these cleanups to rid themselves of bulky hard to dispose of items as well as the recyclable items like e-waste, metal and tires.



OKRA Membership Drive Going on NOW Through February 28, 2023

You can renew your OKRA membership or become a new member today!

How to Join:

Complete the membership form. Send it with your check to the address shown at the end of the form after you hit the "submit" button, or pay with a credit or debit card via PayPal by using the same membership form:

<https://recycleok.org/membership-levels-benefits/okra-membership-form/>

Why We Need You:

- OKRA is the organized voice for Oklahoma recyclers.
- We want to represent your voice to political leaders.
- We are a center point for networking and resource sharing.
- We help the National Recycling Coalition hear from Oklahomans and make national policy that will benefit Oklahoma recyclers.

Benefits of Membership:

All members receive a electronic newsletter subscription, newsletter recognition and discounts at OKRA events. Additional benefits apply to non-profit and corporate members.

For benefit details, see the member level benefits chart.



Membership Levels

There are several levels of OKRA membership, each with corresponding annual dues.

- Student Member (\$5)
- Senior 65+ Member (\$10)
- Individual Member (\$25)
- Non-Profit (\$75)
- Government (\$75)
- Higher Education (\$75)
- Corporate (\$100-1,000)
 - Basic - \$100: 1 membership
 - Additional Memberships - \$25 each
 - Bronze - \$250: 2 memberships
 - Additional Memberships - \$25 each
 - Silver - \$500: 3 memberships
 - Additional Memberships - \$15 each
 - Gold - \$750: 4 memberships
 - Additional Memberships - \$15 each
 - Platinum - \$1,000: 5 memberships
 - Additional Memberships - \$10 each a subheading

Board Meeting Dates:
March 10
May 19
July 21
September 15
December 1

Meet the OKRA Executive Committee

President – Megan Waters



Vice President – Crystal Bennett



Secretary – Paul Streets



Treasurer – Zach Benedict



Past-President – Keima Borsuah

OKRA 2023 Board Members

**Michael Barton
Kara Berst
Tracy Horst
Sara Ivey
Chris Knight
Trudi Logan**

**Bobby Masterson
Jeanette Nance
Michael Patton
Eric Pollard
Amanda Scofield
Bret Scovill**