

SOS Elms News

Newsletter No. 29, December 2015
SOS Elms Coalition, 1618 9th Ave. N, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7K 3A1
Web Site: www.soselms.org



What's Inside:

President's Report.....	1
DED in Saskatoon – Urban Forestry.....	2
Provincial DED Report	3
Saving our Urban Forest	4
Tree Tour Booklet	5
Yard Sale.....	7
Geoff McLeod Tribute	7
Board of Directors	8

President's Report

James Wood

The arrival of the first case of Dutch Elm Disease (DED) in Saskatoon last July was an ominous event. Since then we have been meeting regularly with Michelle Chartier, Superintendent of Urban Forestry and Pest Management, City of Saskatoon. She is advising us how to assist in surveillance, public education, and other aspects of DED control. Together with Urban Forestry we are planning a public workshop in late winter to improve citizen skills in fighting DED. For more details, see Michelle's article on page 2.

Some changes were made to your Board (p. 8) at our AGM last April. I accepted the role of President, Richard Kerbes took on that of Secretary, and Anna Leighton resigned due to family concerns.

When I think back over the past year about what SOS Elms has been busy with, I have to be impressed with our accomplishments in spite of our limited resources. Beyond a doubt, our high point was the publishing of edition two of the Tree Tour Guide. The new edition involved visiting all the trees mentioned in the first edition, deciding if they were still worthy of inclusion or if they even still existed. Some didn't. All chosen trees were re-photographed in colour and the

text revised. Our print run was about 3000 booklets, half of which have already been distributed throughout the community. On page 5 Cliff Speer tells the story of its production, and how we distributed it at events we organized or attended, and through cooperators. Other activities included our annual yard sale which raised \$800 (see Rae Hearn's article on page 7).

So much for our achievements - what about our challenges? We are a small organization with a declining membership and at times our board struggles to deal with the essentials while aware that other projects might ideally be undertaken. We are currently evolving a practice of carving off small jobs and looking for a member willing to be the lead for that activity. If you have an area of interest or expertise where you could help, please let me know. If you feel there is a new area in which we should be more involved as a society, please be in touch.

All organizations have put themselves in silos just by virtue of defining their mandates. The advantage of the silo is it makes it easier to focus what is important to the society, minimizing outside interference. The disadvantage is organizations are at risk of getting out of touch with what is going on in a wider community. SOS Elms is not an exception. I have floated the idea of forming a Saskatoon Urban Forest Advisory Council, a loose assembly of organizations with trees a common interest. Such a group could consist of a representative from each member organization which would meet over lunch once a month to exchange ideas and learn where there are opportunities for mutual assistance.

Do have a happy holiday season, and please consider increasing your involvement in your organization.



An encouraging turn-out to SOS Elms-sponsored Jane's Walk tree tour in Saskatoon's Poplar Crescent area. Photo by Robert White.

DED Confirmed in July 2015 - Report from Urban Forestry Department, City of Saskatoon

Michelle Chartier, Superintendent, Urban Forestry and Pest Management

Dutch elm disease (DED) was introduced to North America in the 1930s and has since wiped out millions of elms across Canada and the United States. It has been present in Saskatchewan since the 1980s, but until this year our closest site with DED has been Davidson. In July 2015 Saskatoon had its first confirmed case of DED: an infected elm located in the Queen Elizabeth neighbourhood. The good news is that this infected tree was detected by the City of Saskatoon's regular surveillance program, and was removed immediately. Surveillance of all City elms is completed twice each season between mid-June and the end of August to check for and test DED-symptomatic trees and to monitor for infractions of the DED regulations.

Upon receiving this first positive test, the City initiated its aggressive DED Response Plan which includes the following actions:

- Removal of the tree that tested positive and disposal of the wood at the landfill.
- Sampling of trees located near the positive tree.
- Immediately increasing surveillance of the neighbourhood where the tree tested positive to search for elm material and other sources of infection.

- Placing additional elm bark beetle adult pheromone traps in the area to increase the monitoring of the elm bark beetle population.
- Educating the media about care and prevention

Increased surveillance meant sending crews to every property within the one kilometre radius and checking for elm firewood or brush and removing it when found. This surveillance resulted in 12 infractions of the provincial DED regulations. Crews also re-checked all elm trees in this area for DED symptoms and an additional 9 suspected trees were sampled. All 9 samples came back negative.

Key components of the City's present efforts to prevent DED include public education, tree maintenance (pruning and removal), monitoring bark beetles, sampling trees that are symptomatic, and enforcement of the provincial DED regulations. Described in detail below are the monitoring of bark beetles, enforcement of the regulations and sampling of symptomatic trees.

Monitoring bark beetles

Monitoring of adult elm bark beetles consists of utilizing pheromone baited adhesive cardboard panel boards (45 x 67cm) affixed to telephone poles in 30 locations throughout the city. The trap and bait are replaced every 30 days from May to September. Crews also place and remove 10 traps for the Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment. The bark beetles that are monitored are the native elm bark beetle, the European elm bark beetle, and the recently introduced banded elm bark beetle. In 2015, there were 621 banded elm bark beetles collected and 21 European elm bark beetles. This is an increase over the 9 banded elm bark beetles captured in 2014. Banded elm bark beetle numbers have increased considerably since their arrival in Saskatoon in 2009.

Enforcement, Pruning Ban

The Saskatchewan DED Regulations (2005) outline what can be done with elm trees and elm wood during different times of the year. DED inspectors and pest management staff watch for pruning of elm trees (American or Siberian) and storing of elm material and infected trees during the pruning ban (April 01 - August 31). If any of the above conditions are observed, a notice of infraction is issued to the property owner.

Sampling

In 2015, 44 elms showing symptoms of DED were sampled, 18 more than 2014. There were 6 trees that tested positive for Dothiorella Wilt, a disease similar to DED but spreads slowly within and among trees. Trees often decline in 3-5 years. Trees with Dothiorella wilt are removed when owned by the City of Saskatoon. If on private property removal is recommended but not required.

Future direction

Funding has been approved by City Council to provide stepped-up DED surveillance and to increase public awareness in 2016. There has also been approval for additional resources to inventory more of the City's elm population on public property which will help in the efforts to manage this devastating disease and prevent the loss of more elms. Maps of elm distribution will be critical in responding to DED. The location of infected trees will dictate the risk to the rest of the urban forest and direct surveillance and treatment activities to areas most at risk.

Here are some things the public can do to help prevent DED:

- Support sanitation efforts by making sure you do not have elm wood or brush stored on your property. If unsure ask the City to inspect the wood by calling 306-975-2890.
- Have your private elm trees pruned. Hire a Certified Arborist with training that meets the provincial regulations, and make sure they have insurance. Pruning to remove dead and dying limbs will reduce elm bark beetle breeding habitat.
- Remove dead or dying elm trees from your private property. Complete elm removal can take place during the ban, but it cannot be stored. All elm wood must go to its disposal site at the Saskatoon landfill. The stump must be removed or debarked to 10cm (4") below ground level.
- Watch for symptoms of DED and report any suspicious trees to the City at 306-975-2890. Someone from Pest Management will inspect and take samples for testing if deemed necessary.



DED – 2015 Provincial Update

Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment

In 2015, the Ministry of Environment continued its strategic approach to the management of Dutch elm disease (DED). In particular, the ministry focused its resources to support communities embracing this responsibility by conducting active DED management programs.

An important part of this support is the maintenance of community buffer zones. The Ministry of Environment looks for and removes DED-infected trees in buffer zones around seven communities (Regina, Moose Jaw, Estevan, Indian Head, Balcarres, Wolseley and Tisdale) to help safeguard elms within the communities. This year, the ministry identified for removal a total of 199 elms from the buffers, down from 246 trees in 2014. In addition, the ministry provided regulatory, technical and scientific support to communities, as well as support for ongoing DED research. The province's Crop Protection Lab continued to provide free sample testing. Of the 285 samples submitted for testing this year, 113 tested positive for DED.

The Ministry of Environment also continued its co-operation with the Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport to manage DED within provincial parks, with Environment conducting surveys and Parks, Culture and Sport co-ordinating necessary tree removals. In 2015, 137 elms were identified for removal within Katepwa, Echo Valley, Rowan's Ravine, and Greenwater Lake provincial parks and the Regina Beach recreation site, a slight increase from 123 trees in 2014.

Outside the buffer zones, urban and rural municipalities are responsible for DED management within their jurisdictions. This year, there was good news for some communities with active DED management programs. Prince Albert, Swift Current, Melfort, North Battleford and Yorkton remained DED-free in 2015. The cities of Moose Jaw and Regina also have comprehensive DED management programs in place, which have been critical to their success to date in minimizing elm loss. Unfortunately, Saskatoon discovered its first infected elm in 2015. The City of Saskatoon was able to contain the loss to only one tree by quickly identifying

and removing the sick elm tree before the disease was able to spread.

The Ministry of Environment also works to inform the public about the positive actions that people can take to help prevent the spread of DED into their communities. Messages highlighted include the importance of proper pruning, done outside the annual ban period (April 01 - August 31), and the correct and timely disposal of elm wood. Also important are regulations prohibiting the transportation, sale and storage of elm fire wood, and establishing standards for tree care professionals. Communities are empowered to enforce these regulations through the appointment of municipal DED inspectors. There are approximately 50 such inspectors currently appointed across Saskatchewan.

For more information about DED or other ministry programs, please contact the Client Service Office at 1-800-567-4224, Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Saving our Urban Forest from Construction Damage

Linda Moskalyk

SOS Elms Coalition is still struggling to convince developers that care is needed when working around trees. It is very unsettling to see a row of formerly beautiful big American Elms that are stressed and declining next to a large construction project. For example, visit the new condo development that is being constructed on the corner of 4th Ave and Queen St. The project boasts of its "Green Initiatives" including 13 American Elms that are 60-65 Years old bordering the property. SOS Elms is extremely concerned that the elm trees on both streets at this construction site were already showing signs of shock and deterioration even before the building was finished. There is a good chance that we will lose some of them adjacent to this project. Another construction site at Queen St and 3rd Ave already has one elm that looks about 60% dead. These trees are public property and are part of the Saskatoon urban forest intended for the entire community to enjoy.

Infill development in mature areas of the city has taken its toll on the urban forest of Saskatoon in the last few years. It is difficult to protect trees,

especially their extensive root systems, from construction. Saskatoon's Urban Forestry department provides guidelines for developers. However, there is no city bylaw to protect the trees, only a policy. Policies and general guidelines are not sufficient as there are only limited penalties and developers who ignore them. A bylaw for tree protection is badly needed here. Such bylaws exist in cities such as Toronto, Oakville, Vancouver, and Calgary.

Mature trees provide priceless aesthetic and environmental qualities to your area. They greatly enhance the beauty and character and moderate the micro-climate, reduce air conditioning costs in summer and heating costs in winter. They also improve air quality, reduce rainfall runoff, lower noise levels and, by carbon capture and storage help to mitigate climate change. The larger the tree, the greater the benefits.

We need everyone's help to ensure Saskatoon's invaluable urban forest is protected. Please lend your voice of concern about activities that are damaging and even potentially killing large mature trees. You can help simply by calling your city councillor and request that they work towards protecting the trees in your neighbourhood. Clearly, a new city tree protection bylaw is badly needed, along with better regulations for developers when working around street trees.



American elm on the 1600 block of 9th Ave North, near board member Cliff Speer's residence. Photo by Cliff Speer/Canoeski

Saskatoon Tree Tour Gets a New Life

By Cliff Speer

Without a doubt, the impressive new Saskatoon Tree Tour guide is the crowning achievement for SOS Elms in 2015. The original 2002 tree tour booklet of Saskatoon's unique and unusual trees, done by Glen Gustafson on contract with SOS Elms, was a great idea that received a favourable reception. In fact, it needed to be reprinted in 2004. It was a low budget, low key, and unassuming presentation, all in monochrome green. By 2013 its print run was pretty well exhausted and our board decided to update the booklet. I applied to TD Friends of the Environment Foundation and the City of Saskatoon Environmental Grants for funding to support a new tree tour booklet, revised, enlarged, updated and reprinted – this time hopefully in full colour.

To our surprise and delight, both agencies approved our requests for funding in early spring 2014. Our prayers had been answered – we could afford full colour after all – and we got down to serious work! A committee was formed, and, to involve the public, we put out a press release inviting people to nominate their favourite trees for inclusion in the fancy new booklet. The release drew excellent and immediate response from the media. Co-president Richard did live interviews with CTV, CJWW radio, Shaw Cable TV, Metro News and the Saskatoon StarPhoenix; and I spoke on CBC radio. The release drew attention to the update of the tree tour and was a great way to promote appreciation of the beauty and value of Saskatoon's urban forest.

Time was short; it was a challenge. To make a long story short, all the photography, editorial and graphic design eventually came together (all in-house!) to give birth to a professional looking, informative, interesting community resource on the intriguing aspects of Saskatoon's marvellous urban forest. Thank you to the tree tour committee: Richard, Jim, Judy, Linda, Paddy and Robert! And lest we forget – many thanks to our generous financial supporters, TD Friends and City of Saskatoon!

Having the book in hand March 26, 2015 just in time for Gardenscape (our self-imposed deadline) was of course, a Herculean task – but we did it! Following Gardenscape, I proposed a plan for getting the book out to the “market”!

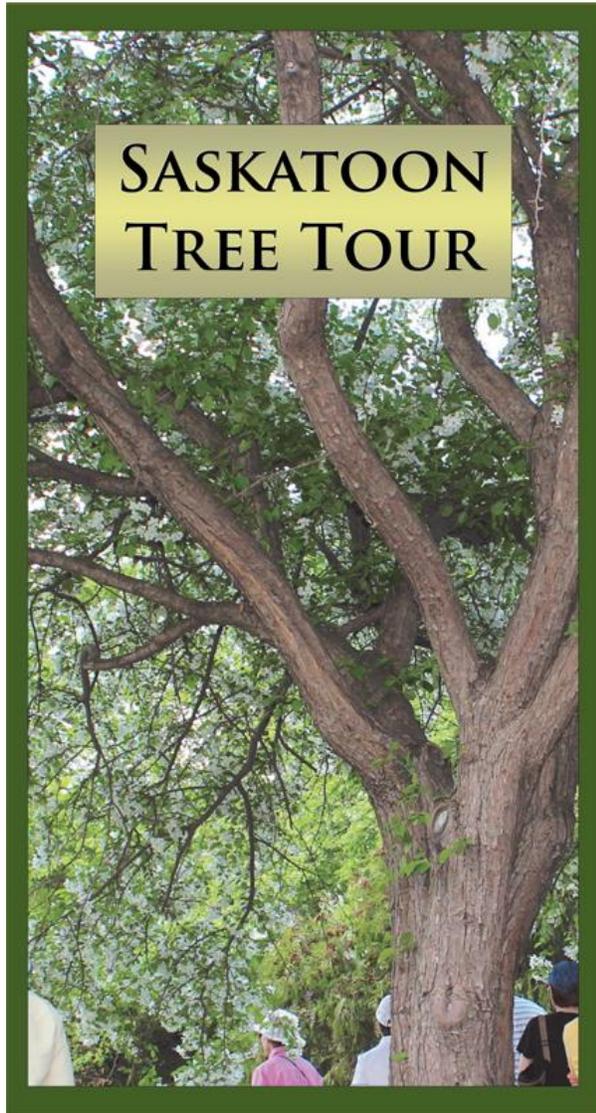
Having been responsible for rounding up the funding for the project, I felt some obligation to not only see it come to fruition, but also see it get into the hands of our tree hugging public. I approached businesses and institutions sympathetic to our cause to help us distribute the booklet. Several were willing to have the tree tour booklet on display. The rest of the Board got behind this idea and soon we had a network of outlets in various areas of the City where the public could drop in and pick up a copy of the booklet for free, or leave a donation if they wished.

In addition, we gave the booklet out at other events where SOS Elms was involved. They included: a Jane's Walk in early May, led by board member Robert White and by Michelle Chartier, Superintendent of Urban Forestry; UofS Hort Week; Saskatoon Environmental Society April AGM; Permaculture Institute spring event; Nature City Festival tree tour at Innovation Place led by Kyla Ledingham; Nature Saskatoon's Golden Eagles May field trip; City Environmental Advisory Committee meeting; McNally Robinson Tree Tour book launch by Linda Moskalyk; and SOS Elms Garage Sale.



The Tree Tour “Centurion Elm”, getting some tree-hugging attention. Photo by Robert White.

See the following updated list, compiled by Karen Weingeist, of the locations where the booklet is available for pick up. Our print run of over 3000 is now half gone. Kudos go to all the individuals and organizations that have assisted us in its distribution!



List of Tree Tour Booklet Distribution Sites

Compiled by Karen Weingeist

- C&F Installations (Irrigation systems) - 2924 Miners Ave. 306-931-8755
- Diefenbaker Centre - U. of S.
- Francis Morrison Library, Local History Reading Room - 311 23rd St
- Innovation Place - UofS Campus
- J S Wood Library - 1801 Lansdowne Ave.
- Meewasin Community Outreach Program
- Saskatoon Urban Forestry Dept
- Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment Forest Service Branch- Box 3003, Prince Albert SK, S6V 6G1
- Scoles Fine Arts Gallery – 106-335 Packham Ave 306-934-2688
- Steephill Food Co-op – 730 Broadway Ave. 306-664-4455
- The Better Good - 714 Broadway Ave. 306-242-4663
- The Refinery - 609 Dufferin Ave.
- Western Development Museum Gift Shop - 2610 Lorne Ave. S.
- Wild Birds Unlimited - 330A-02600 8th Street East, 306-955-2473

For the most up-to-date information on locations, see our website www.soselms.org/tour.htm.





Yard Sale

By Rae Hearn

Our annual SOS Elms yard sale took place a bit later this year, July 25th at Rae Hearn and Doug Mitchell's home. This event has been successful for many years, generating as much as \$900 annually. It is an opportunity for our members to engage with the community, explaining to customers who we are and what we do; and this year, promoting our new tree tour booklet! The items donated are not priced which gives people a chance to offer a donation to our group, providing individual engagement and often lively discussions. It is a fun time and always interesting as to what people find as treasures. I view it as a grand recycling experiment and am always appreciative of the hard work our board members supply. I would especially like to mention Linda Moskalyk, whose energy and optimistic spirit carries us through a long day. Please keep us in mind when you are about to de-clutter your homes, we will always welcome donations for next year's sale.



Geoffrey David McLeod

21 December 1971 – 4 March 2015

As the Parks Superintendent of Urban Forestry and Pest Management for Saskatoon, Geoff was a dedicated custodian of our urban forest, and an important advisor and supporter of SOS Elms. Unfortunately his career was cut short when he was diagnosed with a serious medical condition on May 29, 2013. He had a Bachelor of Science in Biology from the University of Regina (1997), a degree in Forestry Management from the University of British Columbia (2001), and a Master of Science in Insect Chemical Ecology from Simon Fraser University (2005). Fully devoted to his family and friends, Geoff also found time to be avidly involved with various organizations, including SOS Elms, which demonstrated his love for trees, animals, nature, and health. Our sympathies and condolences go out to his wife Jamille McLeod and their little girls, Grace Margaret and Bethany Frances.

Winter Trees

William Carlos Williams, 1883 - 1963

All the complicated details
of the attiring and
the disattiring are completed!
A liquid moon
moves gently among
the long branches.
Thus having prepared their buds
against a sure winter
the wise trees
stand sleeping in the cold



New Members Needed

Rae Hearn

SOS Elms Coalition is an organization that depends on the generosity of our membership. We are always happy to welcome new members through a variety of paths. During the year we participate in several events where we pass on information about our organization. Many of our members are loyal and longstanding. It is our hope to keep strong and proactive by encouraging even more involvement and awareness. If you have friends or acquaintances that would be interested, please have them call one of our board members, or go to our web-site www.soselms.org . We are always open to new members!

SOS Elms Coalition Inc. Board of Directors

President: Jim Wood	373-6007
Treasurer: Cliff Speer	653-5693
Secretary: Richard Kerbes	653-4209
Membership: Paddy Tutty	665-0864
Communications: Paddy Tutty	665-0864
Member at large: Linda Moskalyk	250-0442
Member at large: Robert White	664-3331
Member at large: Doug Mitchell	244-3082
Member at large: Rae Hearn	244-3082

This newsletter edited by Richard Kerbes and Kathy Meeres

Season's Greetings

YES! I WANT TO JOIN SOS ELMS!

<http://www.soselms.org>

- \$10.00 Annual membership per household
- \$_____ Donation
- \$_____ Total - (tax receipt will be mailed to you)
- Money order or cheque enclosed
(Payable to SOS Elms Coalition)
- Yes! I wish to help out as a volunteer



Mail to:
SOS Elms Coalition
1618 9th Ave. N,
Saskatoon, SK
S7K 3A1

Name _____

E-mail _____

Address _____

Postal Code _____ Telephone _____