

# *SOS Elms News*

Newsletter No. 10, Winter-Spring 1999  
SOS Elms Coalition, P.O. Box 1313, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7K 3N9



## **President's Message - Richard Kerbes**

Almost a year has passed since I accepted the role of SOS Elms President. It's been a challenging and rewarding year in the fight against Dutch Elm Disease (DED), and in keeping the American Elm alive and well in Saskatchewan communities. Our experienced and dedicated board has been working hard to get things done. In particular, I thank Anna Leighton for her work on many SOS Elms projects. Unfortunately, Anna found it necessary to resign from the Board earlier this year. However, two new people, Bronco Scorupan and Susan Kaminskyj, joined the Board this spring.

Our continued success is also due to you, the individual members, volunteers and supporters of SOS Elms. We are grateful for project funding received over the past year from The Saskatoon Foundation, Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management, Human Resources Canada, the Saskatchewan Dutch Elm Disease Association (SDEDA), and Canada Trust. We also thank the Meewasin Valley Authority, the City of Saskatoon, Environment Canada, A&A Communications, and the Saskatoon Freenet for in-kind support.

A new SOS Elms project, spear-headed by Rick Miller, took off in February with a weekly series of Elm Alert articles in the Saskatoon Sun. As noted below, the series

included results from our Saskatoon Tree Inventory.

Also in February, SOS Elms activities greatly accelerated when we obtained \$11,000 in federal funds from SERM to expedite a number of activities which had been languishing for lack of resources. To ensure that the work would be completed as required by March 31, we were able to use part of those funds to hire Michelle Chartier as coordinator of the work. In a whirlwind of energy, Michelle worked closely with board members and others to bring everything in on time: a beautiful new SOS Elms colour brochure, an editing and duplication of our video on the DED tragedy in Great Falls, MT, an application to the Bronfman Foundation for a major grant, background research for a submission to the City of Saskatoon, and coordination of our SOS Elms display booth at Gardenscape.

In February I gave a presentation on the history and work of SOS Elms to the Industrial Vegetation Management Association of Saskatchewan and Manitoba, and in March I made a submission to Saskatoon City Council, arguing for their approval of an extra \$90 000 to the city's tree pruning budget. They subsequently approved those funds, which will help to cover the aftermath of damage caused by the October 1998 snow storm, and further improve the pruning cycle of city trees.

As SOS Elms representative, I attended the February and April board meetings of SDEDA. In cooperation with SERM, it is effectively promoting and facilitating DED prevention in the cities, towns, and villages of Saskatchewan. On the legal front, for over five years SDEDA has been working to have official DED regulations passed in the provincial legislature, and to institute a certification program for professional tree pruners in the province. Passage of the regulations has been held up by complications related not to their content, but to where they fit among existing Acts. Certification is also delayed because it depends on the regulations to be passed.

Our plans for the summer include continuation of the Saskatoon Tree Inventory, a display at Hort Week at the University of Saskatchewan in July, and if the Bronfman Foundation accepts our proposal, SOS Elms will be putting on a tree appreciation week in Saskatoon in September.

I invite everyone to attend our seventh Annual Board Meeting at 7:30 PM on June 9, 1999 at the Meewasin Valley Centre in Saskatoon. Following that meeting we will also have our regular monthly Board Meeting, which is open to members and visitors. SOS Elms can exist only if enough people are also willing to do a bit extra. Hope to see you on the 9th!

### **Saskatoon Tree Inventory 1999 - Ray Boyle**

While our inventory covered most of the older residential districts of Saskatoon in our 1997 and 1998, we still have a few areas to cover. We hope that residents of these areas will welcome our surveyors when they ask if they can enter your yard to check on the trees. On leaving they will tell you of any diseases or other damage that they spot, and if possible, give you some advice on the remedy. The new survey areas for 1999 are: Brevoort Park, Nutana Sub-Centre, Eastview, Nutana Park, Hudson Bay Park,

Meadow Green, Montgomery. If time and funds allow we will continue into Sutherland. We gratefully acknowledge funding for this 1999 survey from SERM and SDEDA.

### **Did You See Us In The Sun? - Rick Miller**

The series of 12 Elm Alert ads that we ran from February to May in the Saskatoon Sun is another step in SOS Elms Coalition's efforts to maintain a community focus on DED. Our mandate has always been to educate the public of all aspects of DED. These ads gave us a forum to share tree statistics that SOS Elms had collected and mapped in our Saskatoon Tree Inventory Project 1997-1998. It also allowed us to explain DED in detail and provide general precautionary and tree maintenance directions.

These ads were timely in publicizing the action need to repair damage that the October 1998 snow storm had done to elm trees. Pruning of damaged trees and the removing of limbs and branches are important first step towards preventing DED from gaining a hold in our community. The ads encouraged people to be responsible for their trees and be alert to the possibility that DED could appear at any time. Early detection of DED and immediate action is still our number one line of defense. The ads were made possible through your memberships and donations, the Star Phoenix, and a collaborative effort by the SOS board members.

### **DED is on the Move!**

By Dave Domke

Last year a tree was sampled for Dutch Elm Disease (DED) in Wainwright, Alberta. The sample was difficult to confirm after the lab work was completed. The sample was sent to Alberta Agriculture, then to University of Toronto, and finally London, England. The lab in England confirmed DED.

### **The Saskatchewan DED Hot Spots of 1998:**

Nipawin, Carlyle, Carrot River, Estevan, Aylsham, Bienfait, Arborfield, Roche Percee, Tisdale, Alameda, Lumsden, Oxbow, Muscopetung I.R., Carnduff, Lemberg, Redvers, Langenburg, Carievale, Marchwell, Stockholm, Moosomin, Fleming, Yellow Grass, Trossachs, Arcola.