ADVISORY BOARD — Seven area realtors will serve as the real estate advisory board established by Oakland University. The group will advise on courses and instructors for the school's real estate program. On the board are (from left) E. J. Stefani, owner of Eastern Realty; Lowell Eklund, Oakland's dean of continuing education; Frank Crosby, executive director of two real estate boards; Richard M. Irwin, an appraiser; Walter J. Steiner, of the Southfield office of Real Estate One; Robert H. Carey, president of Thompson-Brown, builders and developers. Roger Blackwood of Holmes-Harmon Corp. and Owen Hall of Hall and Young, Inc., are not pictured.

Suburban Gardener

Researchers Fighting To Save Dutch Elms

By BETTY FRANKEL

Majestic American elm trees once not so long ago brought beauty and dignity and comfort to the streets, parks and yards of America. Now gaunt skeletons or broad stumps are all that remain. Have we abandoned the American elm to extinction and oblivion?

There are still a few million American elm trees left throughout the country. They are dying at a rate of about a million each year. It is estimated that at this rate they will be extinct in about fifteen years. However, the Elm Research Institute holds out hope that a control can be found.

The Dutch Elm disease is caused by a fungus which infects the trees, growing in the water and food conducting tubes that are located in the live growing wood just beneath the bark.

The fungus plugs the tubes so water cannot pass upward from the roots and food manufactured by the leaves cannot be transported to other parts of the tree where it is needed.

The fungus is spread by a small bettle called an elm bark beetle (there are two kinds) that bores into the tree to lay its eggs. These hatch into grubs that live in tunnels beneath the bark until they emerge as adults.

Both the adults and the larvae spread the fungus spores that infect the trees and cause the disease. The bettles are merely carriers and do not cause the disease.

DUTCH ELM disease was first noticed in Europe shortly after World War I. Our government tried to institute controls to keep the disease out of the country, but unknowingly the fungus was brought to this country in some elm wood imported for use in making fine furniture.

Dutch elm disease was first noticed in this country in Ohio and Maryland in the early 1930's.

For many years the accepted control was a spring spraying with DDT. Now that the lethal properties of DDT have been recognized this is taboo.

At best the spraying was only partly successful because it is difficult to get total coverage on a large tree and insects managed to invade if even a few twigs were missed by the spray.

Another problem was that trees growing near each other formed natural grafts between the roots and the fungus spread through these grafts from diseased to healthy trees and could even enter sprayed trees in this manner.

At the present, good sanitation is the best control to use. With strict sanitation losses can be kept down. Cut and burn dead trees and remove stumps, too. Strip the bark from stumps that can't be routed out.

Research has been carried out at several major universities, including Michigan State. Coordination of this research and funds for some of it have come from an organization known as the Elm Research Institute.

THE RESEARCH has proceeded in several directions including breeding at resistant strains of elm trees, biological controls, and chemical controls.

One question researchers are seeking to answer is why elm bark bettles prefer elms and not other trees. The answer seems to be that there is a specific chemical substance in the elm bark that attracts the elm bark beetle.

At Michigan State University Dr. James Bucher is doing research with a predator wasp that attacks the beetle larvae. The problem, though, is how to spread the wasps around so they can attack the bettles.

In other research, resistant trees are being studied. Here and there an elm remains healthy and alive even though others around it succumb. These resistant trees are being studied to determine how they withstand the fungus and they are being used to breed new strains.

Seedling trees from resistant trees will soon be available to the public. Although it will be many years until these little trees could reach the stature of the big old trees that died, the elms can survive only if people continue to plant them.

A third approach is to devise a way to kill the fungus or prevent its growth. Several possible chemicals are being investigated.

SOME of the promising research is being done at Cranbrook Institute by Dr. Bela J. Szappanyes, a Birmingham physician. He has mixed a fungicide with a substance that makes it water soluble so the tree can absorb it. This solution, which he claims is non-toxic to people or animals and is biodegradable, is dripped into holes bored in the trunk of the tree.

His method, which would cost a few dollars per tree treated, is not practical for trees in the wild but would be feasible for shade trees in a yard or park.

The solution used by Dr. Szappanyes is not available for purchase at any stores because of the requirements of the government for strict and careful testing with adequate controls.

Although it is difficult to meet the standards of the Federal government, Dr. Szappanyes' method seems promising and the University of Detroit is going to try it on their remaining elm trees.

Until this, or some other control, becomes available to the public, what can be done? The Elm Research Institute urges careful sanitation and prompt removal of diseased trees and bark. This is the first line of defense at present.

They also suggest that elms be given professional care and also suggest that communities arrange for group tree care rather than leaving it to a hit or miss individual basis.

They also urge that people continue planting elms and they have distributed over 20,000 young elms for planting.

Garden Reminders

Fall web worms, often mistaken for tent caterpillars, can be controlled by spraying with Sevin...Yellow needles on evergreens can be caused by red spider mites. A heavy stream of water from the garden hose can dislodge them...Climbing roses can be pruned now to remove old wood that flowered poorly ...Give late blooming mums a final pinching to keep them bushy and remove some buds from early mums if larger flowers are desired...Divide and transplant iris...Plant seeds of biennials such as foxglove and canterbury bells for bloom next year...Remove faded flowers to keep annuals blooming.

Louvered Shutters

Louvered wood shutters, attractive as window coverings, also are practical in many ways. Over the kitchen sink, for example, splashes can be wiped off easily instead of frequently laundering curtains.

Shutters also make good doors to close off the space between kitchen counters and and cabinets for storing mixers, toasters and the like, yet keeping them easily at hand.

Full-length bifold louvered doors attractively enclose kitchen shelves, turning them into a well-ventilated pantry in a minimum of floor space. Fir and hemlock louvered doors and shutters easily take a variety of finishes.