

## “People, Plants and Pride; Growing Together.”



The **Communities in Bloom** program, inspired by national beautification programs in Europe, was launched in Canada in 1995. The friendly competition has grown extensively across the country at both the national and provincial levels. Canadian towns and cities are working towards creating better communities and healthier places to live and work by their commitment to fostering civic pride, environmental responsibility and beautification through community participation.

The program strives to improve the tidiness, appearance and visual appeal of Canada's neighbourhoods, parks, open spaces and streets through the imaginative use of flowers, plants and trees. A focus on environmental awareness and preservation of heritage and culture also goes a long way in the pursuit of enhancing a community's quality of life. Citizens of all ages, municipal governments, local organizations and businesses take part in the program.

Communities in Bloom competitions involve an evaluation by a volunteer jury of professionals on the accomplishments of the community on eight key criteria: tidiness, environmental awareness, community involvement, natural and cultural heritage conservation, urban forestry, landscaped areas, floral displays and turf and ground cover areas.

### More Than a Beauty Contest



communities with a population of 10,000 to 20,000) for the creation and efforts of the Summerland Asset Development Initiative (SADI), a unique non-profit youth organization focused on developing a responsible, entrepreneurial spirit in our youth. An example of one very successful SADI venture is the Tree Fruit Project. Produce, collected by donations from the community's orchards, is picked by volunteers and members of SADI. One third of the produce is returned to the owner, one third is donated to the food bank and one third is canned and sold by the SADI members as a fundraising activity.

The District of Summerland has participated in Communities in Bloom since 2006 and our efforts have not gone unrewarded! In the first year of competition our neighbour to the north, Kelowna, mentored Summerland in the Canadian Classic category and we received national honours. Five blooms gave special recognition for the riparian habitat conservation at Summerland's lakefront. The following year, five blooms again were awarded in the provincial competition (for

