



White Plains Beautification Foundation, Inc.

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8,000 Daffodils as White Plains Beautification Turns 50

The all-volunteer White Plains Beautification Foundation is turning gardens into gold to celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2015. For starters, in April, WPBF kicks off its golden year with yellow daffodils in public spaces and schoolyards throughout the city.

The blooming daffodils will be seen encircling trees in the long median along outer Mamaroneck Avenue through the Gedney and Rosedale area and in downtown Tibbits Park from north of The Westchester, as well as on the nearby hillside on Westchester Avenue at Franklin Avenue. At the north end of the city, the Reservoir Road lake will also be enhanced by early-blooming gold on its southern bank.

In order to plant 8,000 imported Dutch Master daffodil bulbs last fall, the organization had to organize a tremendous amount of community support. WPBF was joined by adults and children, with a tremendous amount of assistance from the city's public works department. Working tirelessly were WPBF President Deborah Donahoe and board members Jean Bello, Sue Brennan, Mary Briante, Joanna Daddario, Mary Ann DeRosa, Suzanne Evans, Blaine Levenson and Mary Merenda.

The bulb program was the first step in a full one-year celebration. The nurseries that plant and care for the over 60 gardens in the city on behalf of WPBF - Amodio's, Gedney Farms and Ridgeway Garden Center - will continue the gold theme by planting all public gardens with gold and yellow flowers.

"We're incredibly excited to see White Plains awash in gold this spring and summer," says WPBF President Deb Donahoe, "and we hope it gets the attention of residents and local businesses to our good works."

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White Plains schools also got involved through the WPBF daffodil garden competition offering the school with the best golden garden a prize of \$500. Almost all of White Plains' public and private schools participated. The 16 participating schools received 100 daffodil bulbs donated by WPBF. Gardens will be judged on design, creativity and aesthetics. Judging takes place in April and a winner will be announced around June 1. Judges will be Master Gardeners from the organization.

"This is a great student activity and an excellent way to introduce gardening as a life-long passion," states Karen Quinn, chairman of the 50th anniversary committee. More information is available on the foundation's new website www.wpbf.org.

Even residents and neighborhoods got involved. Battle Hill Neighborhood Association became the first neighborhood group to plant bulbs in honor of the 50th "golden year" and other neighborhood associations and civic groups were invited to do the same.

WPBF will also be commemorating the organization's anniversary by participating in the St. Patrick's Day parade and the Memorial Day Parade with flower-decked floats. Additionally, the organization will set up a table during White Plains' Earth Day festival in April, something the organization has done for the last few years. The year culminates in the annual Gala on Oct. 8 at the CV Rich Mansion, with live music, open bar and dinner. Inquiries about tickets to this event can be made at info@wpbf.org.

According to Mayor Tom Roach, "The gardens, scattered throughout the city, each have their own character, each sending the message to visitors and residents alike that White Plains is a place where people care."

About White Plains Beautification Foundation: Incorporated in 1965, after its start in 1952 as a small committee, WPBF is a not-for-profit organization, whose many projects include extensive tree-planting, establishing 60 gardens, building two fountains, a summerhouse and gazebo. WPBF has also provided two street clocks and over 90 teakwood benches throughout city parks. It receives no government funding and relies solely on business and individual donations. It also provides water and maintenance of gardens through its Adopt-a-Park program, supported by individuals and commercial enterprises. Its structure consists of a board of directors and a group of associate volunteers. Those wishing to attend monthly meetings and learn more about becoming involved are most welcome.

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