

"This Blooming City"

As we celebrate twenty years of TV production, which has comprised hundreds of wonderful guests, and twenty-three years of participating in the annual Memorial Day parade, we decided to present something different. Board member Tony Spinelli videotaped the parade from the inside looking out. While hundreds of you watched from the grandstand at City Hall and along the streets, we watched YOU. It's always such fun seeing children and adults waving flags, smiling, and yelling/telling us how wonderful we are (that makes it all worthwhile!).

WPBF presidents traditionally ride with DPW Commissioner Bud Nicoletti in his antique Jeep, hauling a trailer load of flowers and shrubs. Nabel's Nursery loans the plants and loads the trailer. A sporty little red car, in which Tony rode, accompanied them,



sporting the usual tacky plastic flowers and some lopsided, very old signs. Guess that's part of the tradition. Beth and Brian Wallach and Brian's dog Jed complete the group.

We love this event, and the ceremony at the Rural Cemetery at parade's end is something everyone should attend. It makes Memorial Day truly memorable.

White Plains Beautification Foundation, Inc.
P.O. Box 1614
White Plains, NY 10602
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Channel 76 - Cablevision
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Tues. 9:00 pm / Sat. 7:30 pm.



White Plains Beautification Foundation, Inc.

Beautification News

Winter 2010
Volume 33, Number 1

White Plains 2010 Garden Highlights

Barbara Vrooman

Located on Westchester Avenue at the foot of Armory Hill and adjacent to THE WESTCH-

ESTER, the **G. Kent Hawks**

Fountain was created in memory of a 37-year-old architect, good friend, and vice-president

of the WPBF. Another architect on our Board, Robert Pollack, proposed the plan for a rustic, woodland fountain constructed of boulders. We raised \$25,000 and construction began. A dedication ceremony was held in 1978. Surrounded by tall office buildings, high-rise apartments, busy traffic and the huge Westchester mall, this quiet, woodland setting can transport you to another time more peaceful and content. We welcome our newest Major Sponsors of this garden area,



Cont'd Pg. 9

Highlights Inside:

Adopt-a-Park	pg 6
Arbor Day	pg 8
Business Awards	pg 4
Donors Page	pg 10
Gala	pg 5
Supporters' Ads	pg 15
Sponsors /Benefactors .	pg 6
W.P. Gardens Map . . .	pg 5
Watering the Gardens .	pg 14

WPBF Receives NYS Volunteer Award



Accepting the award on behalf of the WPBF at the April Common Council meeting is from the left, WPBF president Mary Merenda, Mayor Adam Bradley, Acting Recreation and Parks Commissioner Albert T. Moroni, and Francine Croughan, Recreation Administrator.

The White Plains Beautification Foundation was awarded The New York State Recreation and Parks Society 2010 award for Volunteerism. Each recreation and parks department state-wide is given the opportunity to submit names of individuals and groups who exhibit outstanding volunteerism for the betterment of recreation and parks in their municipality. The WPBF would like to thank the WPR&P Commission for submitting our name for consideration.

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VISIT OUR WEBSITE:
www.wpbf.org

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Angela Vitellas

Barbara Vrooman

Photography

Roland Barnes

Tracey Swift

* former Presidents

In Memoriam

Hon. Robert F. Ruger

Early this year, White Plains Beautification Foundation, along with all of White Plains, bid farewell to Robert F. Ruger, affectionately known as "Mr. White Plains" for his tireless devotion to the city. A former President of WPBF, Councilman, and White Plains High School Hall of Fame inductee, Mr. Ruger died January 7, 2010, at the age of 97. A teak bench dedicated to him June 2008 sits in Druss Park, down the street from the home where he had lived his entire life. At the dedication, Mr. Ruger told those assembled that he considered himself "a very wealthy man - wealthy in friends" and that he was happy he had "at least done something that made life better for someone else." It was our privilege to know and love him.



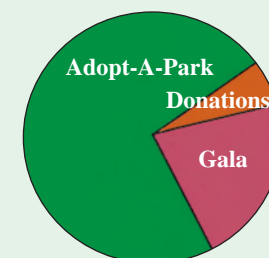
Financial Report

WPBF Funds for 2009

The Foundation Board takes pride in the fact that it has been successful in holding administrative costs to 5% of total expenditures by being an organization of all volunteers:

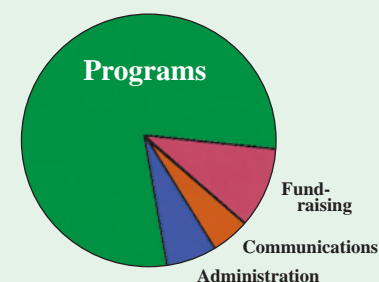
2009 Income: \$193,996

Adopt-A-Park Program (73%):	\$118,653
Annual Gala (17%):	\$28,265
General Donations: (10%)	\$17,078



2009 Expenses: \$161,190

Programs: Garden Planting, Care and Watering, School Garden	
Funding: (81%)	\$131,153
Fundraising, including Gala: (10%)	\$16,287
Communications & Education: (4%)	\$ 5,648
Administration: (5%)	\$8,102



Presidents' Letter



Dear Friends,

Welcome to our Winter newsletter!

WPBF is celebrating 45 years of service to White Plains. Incorporated in 1965, our organization has grown from a small group of intrepid citizens determined to restore the beauty of White Plains to over 70 directors and associate directors.

We have truly changed the face of White Plains. Thanks to the generosity of Adopt-A-Park sponsors and other partners, WPBF has been able to provide the city with nearly 60 gardens planted and cared for by local nurseries. In addition, WPBF has planted over 100 trees and installed more than 100 benches.

By now, our gardens have been put to bed for the winter, but plans are already underway to bring you a glorious spring bursting with color and life!

We hope you enjoy our latest newsletter. Look inside to see what we've been up to. From Arbor Day to our successful Gala to our Business Awards, there is something for everyone.

As always, we welcome your participation - whether you're interested in joining the foundation and serving on one of the many committees or care to support our mission with a donation. Guests are always welcome at our meetings. If you would like to know more about us click on the link "Contact Us" and leave us a message. We'll be happy to contact you.

Sincerely,

Jean M. Bello & Marie Silverman Marich

MARJ PRIESTLEY - One of the co-founders of the WPBF, Marj died September 9th, 2010. She was 93. In 1964 she became active on the small committee that in 1965 incorporated and become a not-for-profit corporation. She served as president from 1972 to 1984. In our Spring 1984 Newsletter, Barbara Vrooman wrote the following tribute

Cont'd Pg. 4

White Plains Beautification Foundation, Inc.

P.O. Box 1614
White Plains NY 10602
www.wpbf.org

A Non-Profit Organization of Volunteers

Inquiries to the President:

Jean Bello (914) 584-1650

e-mail: jeanmbello@gmail.com

or

Marie Silverman Marich (914) 428-7467

A copy of our last financial report filed with the State may be obtained by writing to:

NYS Attorney General's Office
Charities Bureau
120 Broadway
New York, NY 10271

Business Beautification Awards

Mary Merenda

Each year the White Plains Beautification Foundation acknowledges the beautification efforts of our business community and condominium owners for their beautiful gardens.

The 2009 Business Appreciation Awards were presented at our November, 2009, meeting to Dr. Michael Silver, Brook Hills Condos; David Verespy, The Gramercy; Patrick Philbin and Cesar Polanko, 10 Bank Street; Robert Orlofsky and Tony Garrido, Bryant Gardens; and William Blumstein, The Fairways. Also recognized but unable to attend the meeting were representatives of The Gateway Building at 10 Stewart Place; and The Exchange. 2010 awardees will be featured in our spring newsletter.



WPBF Holds Court at Barnes & Noble

Karen Quinn

On April 24th, volunteers from the White Plains Beautification Foundation took to the floors of Barnes & Noble in White Plains as part of an initiative to generate awareness for the WPBF. If consumers mentioned the organization to the cashier, a percentage of their purchases were donated to WPBF by Barnes & Noble. So our energetic volunteers walked the floor wearing WPBF stickers, and a smile, talking about the promotion and placing WPBF stickers on books to be purchased. As an added incentive to bring customers to the store, some of our Master Gardeners set up a table at the entrance, dispensing gardening advice.

We also had a coloring station, where children could color a flower basket picture in time for Mothers Day. This was a small initiative, but it allowed the WPBF to connect with the community and promote the expertise that resides within the organization.

- Touring WPBF Gardens Made Easy -



Committed volunteers partnering with our supporters and donors to bring beauty to our city for over 45 years

Hear ye, hear ye, you can wander throughout our gardens by following the map WPBF recently published of our nearly 60 gardens planted throughout the city. Our new brochure includes a fold-out 17- by 11-inch-map marking the locations of our gardens. The brochure, which also explains WPBF's mission, our programs, activities and accomplishments, and a list of ways you can participate, can be found at the White Plains Public Library, White Plains Department of Recreation and Parks office on Gedney Way, local real estate offices and nurseries. Pick up a

copy and let the map guide you on a leisurely stroll through the gardens from Tibbits Park to Druss Park, from North Street to City Hall, and everywhere in between. Each garden bears a green sign designating the name(s) of its major sponsor(s). Next time you frequent one of the businesses that so generously underwrite the cost of planting and maintaining these gardens, or if you happen to meet one of the individuals who so graciously support these efforts, please say a warm "thank you" for their part in providing these beautiful oases in our growing city.

to Marj: (Cont'd) Marj Priestley's fields of interest beyond that of beautification are sown with tireless hours of service to her community. Whether it be Vice Chairman of the White Plains Planning Board, past Director of the White Plains Regional Chamber of Commerce, member of the Community Council and President's Council of the College of White Plains (now Pace University), President of the Westchester member, Marj serves her community the only way she knows how – SUPREME! Municipal Planning Federation, Past President of the League of Women voters, Urban Renewal Agency representative, Keep White Plains Clean Committee.

* Not one to rest on her laurels (or for that matter, her dogwoods or daffodils), Marj was the driving force, the steering wheel, the weeding whip, as well as our planting partner for the past twelve years she served as the president of the Beautification Foundation.

She mowed you down with her energy, uprooted you with her enthusiasm, made you see gardens where there was gravel, blossoms where there was blight, turned mud into marigolds, trash into tulips and could transplant you from home to Tibbits Park in ten minutes all for the sake of some old tree in trouble.

Thanks Marj, from all of us. We love you!

Evolution of The Gala

Jean Bello

On November 21, 1976, guests paid \$5 to attend a wine and cheese party hosted by the White Plains Beautification Foundation at a cozy French restaurant on Gedney Way called Le Shack. The event netted \$825 and the tradition of a WPBF fall fundraiser was born.

Through the years, the Fall Gala has adopted a myriad of personalities and themes, has honored its founders and friends, has raised as much as \$30,000 in a single event, and has always been the product of dedicated volunteers with a passion for making White Plains the most beautiful city it can be. Local businesses and community members have always generously supported the Gala.

The Gala was held at a variety of places since its beginning, some no longer exist or have changed their name including The Jockey Club, La Reserve, the top of the Financial Center, the Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza, Stouffer Westchester Hotel, the White Plains Hotel and the White Plains Public Library.

Beginning in 1993, WPBF began a 16-year tradition of celebrating the Fall Gala at the Woman's Club of White Plains at 305 Ridgeway. The Club's home at the CV Rich Mansion seemed the ideal location for "A Taste of White Plains," a buffet dinner offering samplings by as many as 14 area restaurants donating their time and specialties.

And, in 1995 a time-honored gentleman's tradition was introduced at the gala: brandy and cigars on the patio. The fall 1995 WPBF Newsletter reports that a few female guests were caught sneaking a puff or two.

"Countdown to 2000" was the theme of the fall '99 gala chaired by Sally Coe. In 2001, chair Kathy Masterson

brought us "The Magic of White Plains" employing the services of a roaming magician. A special raffle was held that evening to raise funds for a memorial tree to be planted in the city's Peace Garden as a tribute to those who died in the terrorist attacks September 11, 2001.



The Ruby Gala, celebrating the foundation's 40th anniversary, was held November 6, 2005 and chaired by Linda and Steven Rasch. Nabel's Nurseries donated 300 long-stemmed roses. Ten local restaurants provided their specialties, coordinated by Peter Herrero. Westchester Wine Warehouse



conducted a wine tasting, and Rosemarie James presented a power point show of WPBF's work. Entertainment was provided by the White Plains High School Honors String Ensemble, directed by William Eckfeld; the City Center Dancers, directed by Dina Giordano; and piano tunes beautifully played by our own Jeff Rainer.

"Puttin' on the Spritz" was the name

chosen for the 2006 gala, co-chaired by Renate Daly and Ruth M. Melnikoff, to call attention to the steep cost of watering our then 50 gardens - \$27,160 in 2006. The water-themed decorations were coordinated by Judi Willsey of Framings/ Event Design and Kathy Masterson.

At the November 4, 2007 gala, dubbed "The Best Party in Town," a special announcement was made that a teak bench would be installed in Druss Park in honor of Robert Ruger's 95th birthday. The Hon. Ruger was a former president of the Foundation.

After 16 years, the gala switched venues this year - just down the road to Westchester Hills Golf Club where guests dined on an elegantly presented hot and

cold buffet and light spirits. Co-Chairs Mary Briante and Claudia Doherty and their gala committee provided surprises, including a wine raffle in which everyone who bought a ticket won a prize. Over 100 bottles of wine were donated by Pernod Ricard.

The price of admission may have gone up since that first gala held in 1976, but for \$85 it's still the best value in town - all you can eat and drink, the opportunity to win some great prizes, and an evening spent in delightful company.

WPBF thanks all who have contributed to our annual galas, and those who have underwritten our costs, provided entertainment, donated prizes for our silent auctions and raffles, designed or printed our invitations and journals, or simply showed your support by attending. You are far too many to list.

All proceeds from the galas help to plant and maintain WPBF's nearly 60 gardens, as well as trees, and provide funds for capital projects which enhance our cityscape, including the Triantafillu Fountain, The Basket, The Gazebo, and many more.

ADOPT-A-PARK PROGRAM 2010

Again, we thank these new groups of contributors, our **Diamond** and **Platinum Sponsors**, for their dedication to the work of our Foundation.

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Peter Gisondi Painting Co., Inc.
Gedney Farms Nursery*

GOLD SPONSORS \$2,500-5,000

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Bloomingdale's* & The
Bloomingdale's Fund of
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Capital One Bank
Heyman Properties

Luria Digital*
Rev. Everett Parker
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Linda & Mel Teetz
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PLATINUM SPONSORS \$5,000-\$9,999

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The Syd & Jan M. Silverman Foundation

* Denotes a gift in kind.

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	Prato Capital Management	

BENEFACTORS \$500-\$999

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	Jo Pellegrino	

Adopt-a-Park Sponsors Recognized

Renate Daly

The annual Adopt-A-Park Appreciation Breakfast was held Thursday, May 20, at Bloomingdale's Restaurant in White Plains. Bloomingdale's has been the generous host of this event for the past 13 years and ensures that this event, which honors our AAP contributors, is a success. The breakfast was attended by approximately 100 AAP sponsors, as well as County Executive Robert P. Astorino, Mayor Adam Bradley, County Board of Legislators William J. Ryan, and many Common Council members and Commissioners. This year after introductions by WPBF president Mary Merenda, our guest speaker was **John M. Gisondi**, President & CEO of Peter Gisondi Painting Co. John and his father **Peter Gisondi** have been generous Diamond sponsors of the Adopt-A-Park Program over the years and known for their generous contribution of restoration and painting of the Gazebo in Tibbits Park.



In grateful thanks and recognition of their efforts over the years, Barbara Vrooman, Chairman of the Adopt-A-Park Program presented the Gisondis with a beautiful stretched canvas photo of the renowned Gazebo. Also receiving a similar appreciation gift of her own garden on the corner of Mamaroneck Avenue and Ridgeway was Diamond Sponsor **Carla Nolletti** of Gedney Farms Nursery. All AAP contributors received token gifts of appreciation for their support of the Adopt-A-Park Program.

Co-Chairs Alison Walsh, Renate Daly and Beth Levine organized the breakfast. The beautiful invitation was designed by Associate member and graphic designer Rose marie James; the cost of printing was donated by DeRosa Builders; and the expenses for printing the breakfast programs was underwritten by PIP Printing and Document Services. As always there was much mutual recognition and gratefulness shown by White Plains Beautification to the contributing sponsors and the city to the Foundation and its generous contributors. This is indeed an APPRECIATION Breakfast.



FRIENDS OF THE PARK \$250-\$499

American Legion Post	Ellen Lynch	Hon. James B. & Nancy J. Reap
Paul Bergins, Esq	Mary & Anthony J. Marano, MD	Ridgeway At White Plains HOA
Arnold & Sandra Bernstein	McCarthy Associates	Hon. Tom & Beth Roach
Hon. Benjamin Boykin	Jean A. & Kenneth W. McComb	Saccardi & Schiff, Inc.
Rebecca W. & Harry O. Bright	Ruth M. Melnikoff, Esq.	Gregory J. &
Club Pointe Condo Association	Mary Merenda	Hon. Beth N. Smayda
Del Bello Donnellan Weingarten	Pamela & Roger Moyer	Silverberg Zalantis, LLP
Tartaglia Wise & Wiederkehr, LLP	M & T Bank	Eleanor Stillman
Haviland Manor Association	Hannah M. & John G. Nelson, MD	Barbara & Barry Wenglin
Stephen & Susan Holden, III	North Street Area Civic Assoc.	Chip, Brenda, CJ, Hunter Williams
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Hela & Peter Kindler	Whyatt & Geiger LLP	
Jim & Leslie Levy	Andrea Paladino	

Names current as of:
November 15th

Arbor Day

Dorothy Schere

On a blustery day in April, the White Plains Beautification Foundation celebrated Arbor Day with the staff and children of the new Post Road School by planting a Princess Dogwood tree in front of the school.

The first graders regaled us all with poems and songs about trees and helped to plant the tree with love. We were joined by Mayor Adam Bradley and Superintendent of Schools Chris Clouet and other officials. Patrick Laidman of The Care of Trees, present-



ed the children with lovely small trees for them to plant at home. The New York State Forrester spoke about the value of trees to our environment. He brought a Tree City flag to mark another year that White Plains had done such an outstanding job of maintaining and replacing trees in the city landscape. He also brought the annual Arbor Day poster for the school and bookmarks for the children and staff. All told, a lovely Arbor Day where we all focused on our beautiful Tree City.

Front Yard Gardens -

We Like Your Gardens!

Have you noticed your neighbors' front yard gardens? We search all summer long and are delighted with what we discover. In every neighborhood there are wonderful surprises. On Battle Hill alone are dozens of spectacular landscapes, too many to list here. In The Highlands we always admire the sweet, fragrant, old-fashioned garden at the corner of Prescott and Greenridge, tended by Jane Mercaldi and her husband Jonathan Booth. Year after year we admire the lush gardens at Barbara Nash and husband Ted Ansbacher's Byron Avenue home. Not to be missed is Esta Blum's



What A Nice Garden!
While all of us at WPBF keep our eyes open in gardening season, we can't see them all. Let us know about a lovely garden you've come across by e-mailing dchervinsk@aol.com or calling 949-1510 and we will be glad to send your thanks and ours with a beautiful postcard.

Ridgeway garden in Haviland's Manor, resplendent in a colorful array of perennials inside and outside of the fence along the front. We like to recognize as many gardens as we can, and our new chairperson (and one of our new vice-presidents) Dorothy Chervinsky will be delighted to hear from you. Contact her at 949-1510 or email Dchervinsk@aol.com with your suggestions.

But now it's nearly winter and we will be watching to see what you have popping through the snow. Red twig dogwood? Winterberry shrubs? Winter pansies? Even snowmen count. The search goes on. How about sending some online photos of your garden, or that of a neighbor?

Gift-giving Magic
It's that time of year, and gift-giving stress can be overwhelming. How about a contribution that will bloom all year long? You need not wrap it or ship it. All you need to do is fill out the attached remittance envelope with the necessary info, write a check, and we (volunteer Verdell Hilliard) will do the rest.

continued from Pg 1

Bernadette and Gregory P. Prato of Prato Capital Management. Nabel's Nurseries has added a lovely fall planting to give a salute to autumn and pleasure to all who pass by.

Main & Mamaroneck Traffic Island Planters are a constant, attractive centerpiece for this center city intersection. Who can still remember when there was a policeman standing on a box by his little booth, directing traffic at this intersection? Later the city's streetscape design included the present median with three street trees. Not an organization to let an opportunity like this to go by, WPBF, working with Commissioner Bud Nicoletti, had empty planters from behind the Public Library brought to the island for planting. This year we thank Amodio's Nursery for the luscious floral display, and our long-time Major Sponsors Barbara & Bill Vrooman and Beth & Brian Wallach for taking this under their wings.

Island Ready for Adoption One of the most colorful areas of the city is located at the foot of Martine Avenue at Bank Street. MALKIN Properties, owner of Ten Bank Street, sponsor one of the two island gardens, but we have lost the sponsor for the other.

Here is the chance to adopt something that will become your own and not need to be clothed, fed, carpoiled, disciplined, taught to drive, educated

and worried about for the rest of you life. It will be just a lovely garden that will carry your name on one of our green garden signs. If you would like more information and adoption papers, please contact us. Our gratitude to Carla Nolletti of Gedney Farms Nursery for the outstanding plantings.

Jan Silverman Memorial Garden (originally Lila A. Wallace Garden) Over the years, several gardens were created to honor special friends of WPBF. This garden honored Lila A. Wallace, founder with her husband DeWitt, of the Reader's Digest. Mrs. Wallace was an important friend and benefactor to WPBF and helped with the final funding of our Triantafillu Fountain at the Intersection of Main Street and North Broadway. The garden was funded by the Reader's



Digest Foundation for many years. When the funding stopped in the early 1990's, Syd Silverman took over as a Platinum Sponsor, and it is now called



Jan's Garden in memory of his dear wife who was a great friend of our foundation, and, incidentally, mother of WPBF co-president Marie Silverman Marich. This is the first garden that dazzles your eyes as you drive down North Broadway heading into the city. We thank Carla Nolletti of Gedney Farms Nursery for this spectacular display. It is very difficult to put this garden to bed. It keeps wanting to bloom right through to the very end of fall and is so reminiscent of the joyous person for whom it is named.

WPBF Donors (7/1/09 - 9/21/10)

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(See article on Pg. 4)

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Volunteers: You could never get people to work this hard if you paid them for it.

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Cont'd Pg. 14

Volunteers Come in All Sizes, Shapes, Ages

Volunteers of all ages comprise the WPBF, but we are especially proud of a long-time member of our board who sends out our Memorial Notices. Magda Bondy turned 99 in November, and we wish her continued good health and hap-

piness. A retired social worker, Magda is also a volunteer at White Plains Hospital and a member of the "Knitwits" whose beautiful knitted garments can be found at the hospital's gift shop. Happy Birthday, Magda!

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In Memoriam

Joseph E. Curtis 1922-2010

"Parks are the lungs of the community" said Joe, a former Commissioner of Recreation and Parks and a WPBF board member in the 1960s. Joe was vital to our success in those early years. A dynamic leader and clear thinker, he also coined our slogan and goal "City in the Park." Joe led us on our first Urban Design Odyssey to five countries in Northern Europe in 1969, and later to Boston, when he became that city's Commissioner of Parks. We learned much from these study tours, and from Joe. Devoted father of eight daughters, he was respected and loved by all. We miss him.

Water Water Everywhere...We Wish

Mary Merenda

The summer of 2010 marks the third year of our successful garden watering program in cooperation with the City of White Plains Youth Bureau and the Department of Public Works Department.

The program was initiated by Roland Barnes, WPBF Treasurer, who realized that not only did the Foundation have to raise money to plant the gardens but also that we had to pay the nurseries up to \$40,000 to water the gardens throughout the summer months. His solution was to approach the mayor's office, Youth Bureau and DPW to come up with a program to cut our watering costs but at the same time offer employment to workers from the Youth Bureau Summer Program.

Perhaps this past summer you noticed our youth workers Kevin Barry, Jesse Esteves, Richard Pino, Peter Bello and Devon Burhanan in their bright orange vests and DPW trucks watering, weeding and picking up debris in gar-



dens throughout the city. Frank Williams, WP Youth Bureau Director, said, "Thanks to the White Plains Beautification Foundation, the White Plains Youth Bureau

watering project, in collaboration with the Department of Public Works, helped to beautify and keep green more than 50 gardens in the City of White Plains. Faced with one of the hottest summers in recent years, the watering project provided relief to the

summer heat. For the summer youth workers, caring for the gardens was not only about watering the plants and gardens, it was about creating a healthy environment for our community."

Special thanks to Roland Barnes for his inspiration, to WPBF volunteer MaryAnn DeRosa who served as liaison between the Foundation and the Youth Bureau, to Patti Staffiero, Youth Employment Supervisor, and to DPW Commissioner Bud Nicoletti and his staff from DPW for their dedication and commitment to the program.

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