

Dunlap Flower Club Still Growing, Keeping Community in Bloom

It takes more than sunshine and rain to keep Dunlap blooming.

Since forming in 2022, the Dunlap Flower Club has taken on an increasingly visible role in beautifying the community, planting and maintaining flowers throughout downtown and caring for landscaped areas in the city's parks.

What started with a small group of volunteers has continued to grow, both in membership and in the amount of work the club takes on each year.

"The group has grown, and the work has grown," said Susan Nemitz, who has helped lead the club in recent years.

Today, approximately 17 volunteers are involved in the Flower Club. These volunteers include Mary Jo Hartwig, Byron Hartwig, Ruby Mumm, Cindy Stessman, Deb Hull, JoAnn Oppold, Rory Conrad, Barb Cory, Judy Ronk, Linda Lehan, Denny Lehan, Karen Giovanetti, Patty Mumm, Theresa McAllister, Mark McAllister, Susan Nemitz and Linda Hicks, with several new members joining the effort this year.

The club currently cares for 31 planters throughout Dunlap, but its work extends well beyond the planters residents see along the streets.

Members also weed and maintain five landscaped areas at the Dunlap City Park, care for the mulch landscaping along the Railroad Heritage Stairs, and tend to two memorial areas at Pleasant View Park.

And the work doesn't end after the flowers are planted in the spring.

Throughout the summer, volunteers water, weed and care for the plants. In the fall, the flowers are removed and replaced with seasonal decorations. Before Christmas, members are back at work again, filling planters with winter greenery and decorations.

To make the summer workload manageable, members divide up the planters and areas, with volunteers generally responsible for watering one day each week. Barb Corey also waters the planters on weekends and handles fertilizing.

Nemitz said the time commitment is smaller than people might think.

"Most people are assigned six to nine planters, and it takes only 15 or 20 minutes a time," she said.

More volunteers would make the commitment even smaller, particularly during stretches of hot, dry weather when the flowers require additional attention.

"If we get more people, it will be much easier," Nemitz said.

Each year also brings a little trial and error. The club meets to discuss what to plant, what worked the previous year and what might need to change.

This year brought an additional learning curve with new, larger planters.

"We tried different stuff because of the new planters," Nemitz said. "The size and height are different than what we're used to. We've learned a lot this year about what we can and can't plant."

Those lessons will help shape next year's displays. Nemitz said the club hopes to incorporate even more color into the planters next season.

The flowers and supplies are made possible largely through community support. Each year, the club sends letters to area businesses and individuals seeking donations,

typically receiving support from around 20 donors. The Boyer Valley FFA has also helped provide flowers for the park in previous years.

For the volunteers, the payoff is seeing the difference their work makes around town.

“It’s great to beautify the community,” Nemitz said. “I think it feels good to do something for Dunlap.”

The group receives plenty of compliments on the flowers each year, and Nemitz said she hopes the displays create a welcoming impression for both residents and visitors.

“I think it beautifies our community. It’s welcoming,” she said. “Who doesn’t like flowers?”

More than anything, she hopes the flowers encourage a sense of “pride in Dunlap.”

Nemitz is particularly proud of the displays at the city park, where the larger planters allow the flowers to make an impact, as well as the flowers at People’s Park.

Looking ahead, the club would like to continue improving the displays while adding more volunteers to its ranks. With enough people participating, Nemitz said members could potentially rotate responsibilities and only need to tend to the planters every other week.

“It’s a great group,” she said. “Everyone gets along.”

And the invitation to join is wide open.

While the flowers may appear to be a natural part of Dunlap’s landscape each summer, Nemitz said there is one thing she wishes people understood about keeping them looking that way:

“It just doesn’t happen on its own.”

Behind every planter are volunteers who plant, water, fertilize, weed and clean up throughout the year.

Nemitz hopes those volunteers know their efforts are noticed.

“I hope the members of the club feel appreciated,” she said.