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Margo Reynolds tends to her new daffodils, courtesy of the Oneonta Garden Club (Ian Austin/ALLOTSEGO.com)

By LIBBY CUDMORE • Special to www.Allotsego.com

ONEONTA - Even though April has been heavy on the showers - and snow! - there is still sunshine to be seen on lawns across Oneonta.

“Daffodils are so cheerful,” said Anita Levine. “They really do give a sense of sunshine on a cloudy day.” Levine, along with her neighbor, Rachel Hamblin, were two of the nearly 180 Oneontans who received a free bag of 25 daffodil bulbs last October, courtesy of the Oneonta Garden Club (and a Future For Oneonta Foundation grant.)

“Daffodils are deer resistant and they do very well in our area,” said the Garden Club’s Laurie Zimniewicz, who organized the giveaway. “They’re also one of the first blooms of spring, so the ground can be covered with snow, but then here come the daffodils!”

The project, which started in 2018, was originally inspired by a city project in front of Zimniewicz’s house at the turn of the century. “The medians (on Irving Place) were all open, and I saw that there were these beautiful daffodil bulbs at Walmart,” she said. “I emailed everyone on the block to ask if they would help me put some in, but by the time they got

back to me, they were all sold out.”It was an idea she never gave up on, and 15 years later, in 2018, they applied for and received the grant, giving away 2,000 bulbs, packaged in bags of 25 at the Oneonta Farmer’s Market. [MAIN MENU](#)

The program was such a success the giveaway was doubled last fall. The bulbs are planted in groups of 8-10 before the snow so that they can bloom as soon as spring begins.

“So many people are telling me, ‘Thank you for this’,” said Zimniewicz. “Seeing these bright flowers, when everything is so blue, really makes people feel good.”

“This is our first year planting,” said Margo Reynolds. “And I’m not just enjoying them in my backyard, but I love seeing them all over the city.”

“We got some last year,” said Levine. “They turned out so lovely that we got more this year.”

For Steve Johnson, they even served as a makeshift memorial after a “visiting snowman” met an ill fate on the site of his flowerbeds. The daffodils recovered, and now, a “R.I.P.” memorializes the fallen snowman.

They also gave bulbs to organizations, including the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in West Oneonta and Housing Visions in the Silver Creek neighborhood.

“We’re always looking for donated plants,” said manager Meghan Greenleaf. “I saw the ad in the paper and went to go pick some up. I thought we’d just get one bag, but they were so generous that they gave us several!”

There were so many, she noted, that she didn’t get to plant all of them this year. “We want to plant some around our sign next year,” she said. “But already, the residents are telling us how much they like looking out their window and seeing them in bloom.”

In addition to the plantings in gardens throughout the city, the Garden Club also planted some at the entrance of the Lettis Highway.

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