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Daffodils on the hills mark an early spring

By Vera Kochan



Spring has sprung on Daffodil Hill Photo Vera Kochan

Punxsatawney, Pennsylvania, has Phil the groundhog. Moraga has Daffodil Hill. The yellow blooms tell us spring is making an early appearance.

Moraga's tradition of planting daffodil bulbs in public places goes back over two decades. Through the years, residents have been able to spot daffodils planted by project lead/organizer Moraga Valley Kiwanis Club members and friends along Moraga Way near Moraga Country Club, around town of Moraga signs, the entrance to Hacienda de las Flores and on Moraga Road across from the Moraga Shopping Center. The current location, just north of Moraga Commons Park along Moraga Road, has been dubbed Daffodil Hill.

According to Kiwanis Club Secretary Sam Sperry, on Nov. 30 the volunteers planted 2,500 daffodil bulbs. The club contributed 1,000 bulbs, Joan Bruzzone contributed 1,000 bulbs and Kenny Murakami, owner of Moraga

Garden Center (where all of the bulbs were purchased) contributed 500 bulbs.

In recent years, an incentive was added to entice more volunteers to show up for the annual beautification project. Kiwanis member Sonny Tsuboi contacted Disney requesting free tickets to auction off during the annual Lobster Fest fundraiser. Having provided four tickets in the past, two years ago "Disney changed their qualifications for tickets, now asking groups to volunteer for community projects," explained Tsuboi. "I thought our annual daffodil planting was an ideal platform to incorporate into qualifying for tickets. However, additional requirements were to include families and kids, as well as an educational component."

To get the free tickets, members and their families helped out. As word spread, Scout troops pitched in. As the volunteer number grew, so did the free Disneyland tickets available to auction off. Prior planting seasons have earned 10 tickets.

"We had 60+ volunteers this time, the largest group yet to participate," said Sperry. "Twenty Kiwanians, together with 25 children (from Kiwanis families, some Cub Scouts and both Boy and Girl Scouts) and over 15 non-member adults (mostly parents of the children or Scout leaders, but a few other community members as well)." If the participants exceed 70 next year, the club would be awarded 20 free tickets.

The Disneyland tickets will be auctioned off during the April 18 Lobster Fest. For more information visit: moragavalleykiwanis.org or call (925) 388-0492.

Reach the reporter at: <u>vera@lamorindaweekly.com</u>

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