

2016 Noontime Kiwanis Flower Basket Program **Update**

The Red Wing Noontime Kiwanis Flower Basket Program is alive and doing well. We are excited to start a new year with 2016 and working with our many partners. Obviously 2016 brings a challenge with the Main Street road project going on but this will be a minor bump in the road (no pun intended) for the flower basket program.

There will be 202 flower baskets for 2016 compared to 238 in 2015. The reduction of 58 flower baskets is as a direct result of the road construction project but other areas were identified to place 22 of the lost flower baskets, otherwise the locations where there were flower baskets in 2015 will be the same for 2016. Our flower basket project committee made up of a Kiwanis member, Red Wing Public Works staff and representatives from Sargent's and Hallstrom's, met in October to discuss the 2015 season and also to plan for the 2016 season. It was decided that the following locations would be good places to put some (22) of the lost flower baskets:

- * Median in front of the YMCA
- * Levee Road right behind the YMCA
- * 400 block of Plum Street - Redman's side

The median in front of the YMCA and Levee Street in back of the YMCA were identified because there is a fair amount of traffic that goes by there and when the flower baskets have to be removed it won't effect many businesses. The 400 block of Plum Street - Redman's side, was identified because there were no baskets put up there because of trees that prevented it. Now that there

are no trees, baskets can be put up and in all fairness they would have been put up initially if it weren't for the trees.

The yearly cost of the flower basket program has been between \$26,000 and \$30,000 depending upon the number of flower baskets, related expenses and unforeseen costs that arise. Funds used to cover the costs of flower baskets is raised by Noontime Kiwanis and this fluctuates yearly since it is donation based. In 2013 \$30,000 was raised, in 2014 \$36,000 was raised and in 2015 \$42,000 was raised. It should be noted that 2015 was the 25th Anniversary of the flower basket program and a big push was made for donations which resulted in more money being donated. For the most part money raised is pretty close to expenses incurred. Presently it is believed that the number of baskets we had in 2015 is sustainable, as long as our yearly donations do not drop and that in order to increase the number of flower baskets we would have to be concerned about funding sources.

Certain questions keep coming up regarding the flower baskets. One question has to do with the new light poles on Main Street from last years road construction project and if there will be flower baskets put on those poles. There have never been flower baskets on that section of Main Street so unless there is a new funding source to cover that expense no flower baskets will be put there. The second question has to do with flower baskets on W. Main Street. At this time there are not light poles that will hold flower baskets so flower baskets can not be put there. It is believed that in the next 3-5 years there will be new light poles put up and at that time it will be possible to put flower baskets up. I believe everyone would like to

see flower baskets on W. Main Street and when the time is right there will be discussions on possible funding sources to cover the costs. The third question has to do with what role the City of Red Wing plays in the flower basket program since some believe that the City covers the costs associated with the program. The flower basket program would not be possible without the cooperation of the City of Red Wing and the work they do but they are not covering the costs associated with the flower basket program, other than when they purchase flower baskets for specific city property. At the end of the year the City of Red Wing sends Noontime Kiwanis a bill for the services they provide towards the flower baskets. Again, the flower basket program runs totally on donations received.

I know there may be more questions that people may have and I would be more than happy to answer them if I can so please feel free to contact me. Thank you for all that you do to help keep the flower basket program going and please consider making a donation for the 2016 flower basket program. In the next couple of months there will be information sent out explaining how donations can be made.

Respectfully,

Tim Sletten

Noontime Kiwanis

timsletten3@me.com

388-9842