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GHCP's red, white and blue campaign getting under way

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A sure sign that summer has arrived in the Hazleton area is the sight of those red, white and blue bows and flowers you see around here all summer traditionally.

Well, summer must be near because they're here.

The Paint The Town Red, White and Blue campaign was begun by the Greater Hazleton Civic Partnership in 2000, as a way for Hazleton-area residents to show community pride.

It will be rekindled for

another summer, as the Greater Hazleton Area Civic Partnership distributes flowers to all local municipalities that want them.

The flowers will be distributed from the residence of Partnership member Lena Kotansky, rear of 131 N. Church St. – between Holly and Tamarack streets – Saturday morning from 8 to 9 a.m.

Any official who wants to get flowers to plant in their municipality can show up and

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get some.

Bob Skulsky, the Partnership's executive director, said each municipality can get as much as two flats of flowers each.

A flat of flowers, Skulsky said, is about a dozen.

After having been successful in other communities, the Partnership adopted the program to tie red, white and blue bows, and plant red, white and blue flowers, all over the area, to give local residents a way to show their patriotism.

The campaign traditionally runs from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Bows are already out this year.

Last year was supposed to be the same, but getting the bows down lagged behind a few days – to Sept. 10.

That turned out to be unfortunate, given the events of Sept. 11.

Alice Kender, executive director of the Hazleton Chapter of Volunteers said as more people were looking for bows after the Sept. 11 tragedy, she found a lot of the bows were taken down.

Unfortunately, Joseph Yannuzzi of the Greater Hazleton Chamber of Commerce, said the bows were taken down in Hazleton and West Hazleton Sept. 10 – the day before the tragedy.

But, volunteers from the Hazleton Area Volunteer Center put up 50 new bows, as well as planting 300 daffodil bulbs around City Hall, the Greater Hazleton Area Public Library and Hazleton Memorial Park, to remember those who lost their lives Sept. 11.

The bulbs were planted, and the bows put up, as a Make A Difference Day project Nov. 2-3.