

Children Cultivate Gandhi Garden

BY PAT VEGA

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Today was Green Up Day in Union Square Park. Farmers Market merchants donated eight flats of plants — marigolds, pansies and impatiens — to be planted in the Gandhi Garden.

Established by the City of New York and surrounding a bronze statue of Mahatma Gandhi in Union Square near the New York Culture Center, the Gandhi Garden has been cared for by members of the Garden Committee and the Boys and Girls Group for the past two years. Last August, the city surprised the volunteers with a certificate praising their efforts.

Today, the garden was so crowded with tulips planted last fall by the children that there was no room for all the new plants. The leftovers, mostly impatiens and pansies, were planted in front of the New York Culture Center.

Also, during the winter months, the boys and girls decorated clay pots with paint and decoupage and started seedlings indoors.

Last summer, because water in Union Square had been turned off, young men's division members carried water every day to the garden. This year, the city's Parks Department provided ample support, bringing bottles of water, wheelbarrows of chips for mulch, and garden tools.

Manhattan Borough Parks Commissioner Adrian Banepe stopped by to thank the volunteers. Many neighbors also thanked the boys and girls for their efforts to beautify the park.

"The children love it," said Rose Glover, one of the coordinators. "It's something they can point to and say 'I did that.' They love putting on gloves and getting into the dirt," she beamed.

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