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Student's mom stays busy keeping Thomas More campus abloom

BY HOWARD MCEWEN | ENQUIRER CONTRIBUTOR

CRESTVIEW HILLS - Pamela Spoor does her part to make sure Thomas More College is as green as her thumb.

The Park Hills resident and parent of a Thomas More alumnus and student has tended the flower beds on the school's 100-acre Crestview Hills campus for the past year and half as a volunteer.

"When my daughter first began attending, our car shortage led me to spend time waiting for her and as I sat there I would think about the possibilities," said Spoor. "It is like an ever-changing canvas. Each season has its own potential."

Spoor's full-time work is home-schooling her children. She also volunteers in the Park Hills Gardens.

Spoor approached Thomas More President Margaret Stallmeyer with the idea of improving the campus appearance. She promptly gave her blessing.

"Service to others is a key component to a Thomas More education," said Stallmeyer. "Our academic programs of study emphasize liberal arts education within a context of ethical concern and social responsibility."

In spring 2005, Spoor planted cannas, verbena, lantana and dahlias. In the fall, she planted tulip bulbs that blossomed this spring. She's also done plantings around the shrine of the Blessed Virgin and has begun work on the campus entryway.

"We hope to plant this in an array of perennials, but it will take some time to achieve a mature effect," said Spoor.

She spends three to four days a week tending the plants on campus. She - with help from her daughter and son - does all of the planting, watering, feeding, weeding and pruning. She has hopes of installing a drip irrigation system which provides more efficient use of water.

The bulbs bring the most work in the fall.

"The tulip planting is far and away the hardest job because there are so many of them - thousands - and they have to go four to six inches deep. It is also cold when the tulips are planted and I hate to be cold," she said.

Spoor also serves as an informal adviser to the Thomas More grounds crew.

"Her knowledge of plants, flowers and trees and how to maintain them has helped us beautify the campus even more," said Director of Facilities Jeff Kordenbrock.

"We have planted new trees in some areas and she has advised me on which types of trees to buy and plant for different areas so that they will flourish," he said. "The campus has been enhanced by the flowers in the gardens."

Spoor comes by her interest naturally.

"My father is an excellent gardener," Spoor said. "He specializes in topiary. My mother excels in flowers. My brother is a botanist by training. One of my twins has taken up the art of bonsai. I just come from a family that loves plants."

Stallmeyer sees Spoor's work as another way to teach the school's mission.

"Pam Spoor, by her service to the college, not only beautifies our environment and lifts our spirits, but also models for our students the service to the community that we hope to instill," she said.