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## PRESS RELEASE

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Laura A. Kunkle

America in Bloom Executive Director

### **America in Bloom Judges to Visit Belpre, Ohio**

Professional volunteer judges from the America in Bloom (AIB) national awards program will visit Belpre, Ohio on July 10 and 11. This is Belpre's sixth year as an America in Bloom participant, and a member of the elite *Circle of Champions*, winning Outstanding Achievement awards for Community Involvement in 2013 and 2014 and for Overall Impression in 2016. Belpre is one of the many proud and passionate communities across America working on local revitalization programs with an eye to receiving a prestigious America in Bloom national award.

Belpre joins Gallipolis, Ohio; Greendale, Indiana; and Logan, Ohio in the Small Circle of Champions population category this year.

In addition to a receiving detailed written evaluation from the judges citing strengths and opportunities for improvement, participants receive a bloom rating and special mention for what the judges deem to be an extraordinary project or program. Additional awards that can be earned are as follows:

- Population category winner
- Outstanding achievement award – the “best of the best” over all participants in each of the six evaluated criteria
- Special awards
- Community Champion
- YouTube Video

Population category winners are invited to participate in international competition via the Communities in Bloom program in Canada.

Judges will be evaluating the community's efforts in the areas of overall impression, environmental efforts, heritage preservation, landscaped areas, urban forestry, floral displays, and community involvement in the municipal, commercial, and residential sectors.

The judging team members are Karin Rindal and Teresa Woodard.



Karin Rindal



Teresa Woodard

**Karin Rindal.** Karin Rindal's wide ranging business career in manufacturing and government includes time involved in international trade program evaluation and training in Total Quality Management (TQM) and Malcolm Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence. In 2004 Karin discovered the New Jersey Master Gardener program. She was appointed to the Board of Directors at the Frelinghuysen Arboretum in Morristown, NJ, where she organized annual plant sales and coordinated activities of volunteer committees including donations, raffle, and publicity and print materials.

Karin has won awards at the New Jersey Home and Garden Show for container design and for horticultural entries at the Newport, RI Flower Show. For two years she wrote a regular weekly garden column for the Millburn/Short Hills Patch. Since 2005 she has taught gardening and cooking classes to adults and children. After a trip to Germany to do on-site research and photography, her most recent lecture involves the herbs and gardens of medieval cleric, Hildegard Von Bingen.

Karin currently volunteers at the US Botanic Garden where she has assisted with a broad variety of educational events, including presenting a class on sustainable container gardening. Through her work at the Botanic Garden on the Sustainable Sites Initiative™ (SITES) she completed the requirements for the New Jersey Environmental Stewardship program.

**Teresa Woodard** is a prolific garden writer, an award-winning master gardener and a backyard conservationist from central Ohio. After graduating from Indiana University with a bachelor's degree in journalism, she worked seven years for a Columbus, Ohio public relations firm marketing the city's economic development and promoting its restaurant and hotel chains' community outreach efforts. Teresa took a new path in 2007 pursuing a freelance writing business focused on her passion of gardening. She currently scouts, writes and produces stories for *Better Homes Gardens* special interest magazines, *Country Gardens*, *The Chicago Tribune*, *Midwest Living*, *Ohio Magazine* and *State-by-State Gardening* magazines. She also travels frequently and blogs with two other garden writers at [www.heartland-gardening.com](http://www.heartland-gardening.com) She is a Master Gardener Volunteer for The Ohio State University Extension and won the 2015 Ohio Outstanding Master Gardener Award for her efforts to launch a Heritage Tree Program, help organize a conservation tour for a nationally protected river and publicize Master Gardeners' efforts around the state. At her rural home in a conservation development near West Jefferson, Ohio, she nurtures prairie strips, an edibles garden and perennial beds and helps maintain the development's 250-acre preserve.

To date, nearly 250 communities from 45 states have participated in the program and more than 22 million people have been touched by it. Awards will be announced on October 5-7, 2017 at AIB's National Symposium & Awards, held this year in Holliston, MA.

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America in Bloom is an independent, non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to promoting nationwide beautification programs and personal and community involvement through the use of flowers, plants, trees, and other environmental and lifestyle enhancements. America in Bloom provides educational programs, resources, and the challenge of a friendly competition between participating communities across the country.