



MEDIA RELEASE

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Echo, Oregon's America in Bloom Awards Results Announced

(COLUMBUS, OH): Top honors for the prestigious 2015 America in Bloom national awards program were announced at the annual awards held in Holland, Michigan on September 26.

All participants were evaluated on six criteria: overall impression, environmental awareness, heritage preservation, urban forestry, landscape, and floral displays. Additionally they were judged on their community involvement across municipal, residential, and commercial sectors. America in Bloom is the only national awards program that sends specially trained judges to personally visit participants. In addition, each participant receives a detailed written evaluation that can be used as a guide to future improvements.

Echo received a four bloom rating out of a possible five blooms.

In addition, they received a special mention for their community's heritage preservation efforts.

Bruce Riggs and Leslie Pittenger, AIB judges, visited communities of similar populations and spent two days touring each town, meeting municipal officials, residents, and volunteers. Other competitors in the circle of champions category for small communities were Gallipolis, OH; Greendale, IN; McCall, ID; and Lewes, DE. This year AIB established a new circle champions category of competition reserved for communities that have won their population category multiple times in past years.

The judges recognized, "A great deal of effort went into to identifying and securing available grants for restorations, preservation and improvements in many areas of Echo." They went on to note, "The Echo Historical Museum is located in a beautiful bank building and is loaded with wonderful donations and exhibits. Another jewel is the Chinese House/OR & N Railroad Museum."

America in Bloom executive director, Laura Kunkle, said, "America in Bloom is helping towns and cities of all sizes achieve their potential. Every year our participants raise the bar, and the accomplishments and progress shown by this year's group is again remarkable. These are, without a doubt, some of the best places to live in America."

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Congratulations to Echo!

Registrations for the 2016 national awards program can be submitted until February 28, 2016. Eligible participants include towns, cities, college and university campuses, business districts, military installations, and recognized neighborhoods of large cities.

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 enhancement.

For more information, visit www.AmericaInBloom.org.

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