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America in Bloom Judges to Visit Saratoga, CA

Professional volunteer judges from the America in Bloom (AIB) national awards program will visit Saratoga, CA on May 3-4. This is Saratoga's second year as an America in Bloom participant, and it 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. In 2015, Saratoga won in its population category and received a special AIB award for the most beautiful canopy of trees.

Saratoga joins St. Charles, IL; Henderson County, NC; and Midland, MI in the 30,000 to 50,000 population category.

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 Award

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, landscaped areas, urban forestry, floral displays, and community involvement in the municipal, commercial and residential sectors.

The judging team members are Karin Rindal and Pam Turrell.



Karin Rindal



Pam Turrell

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.

Karin's career began with a degree in Political Science and German, with a minor in French, followed by a Master's Degree from Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies.

Pam Turrell holds a Sustainable Landscape Certificate from Dawes Arboretum in Newark, Ohio, and is studying Landscape Design and Maintenance at Columbus (OH) State Community College. She worked in partnership to launch "Greenhope", a web based business selling native trees and shrubs as gifts. Pam is a passionate home gardener, interested in backyard wildlife, native plants in the landscape, and attends many horticulture-related conferences.

To date, nearly 250 communities from 41 states have participated in the program and more than 22 million people have been touched by it. Awards will be announced on October 6-8, 2016 at AIB's National Symposium and Awards, held this year in Arroyo Grande, CA.

America in Bloom is an independent non-profit 501c3 corporation. America in Bloom envisions communities across the country as welcoming and vibrant places to live, work, and play – benefiting from colorful plants and trees; enjoying clean environments; celebrating heritage; and planting pride through volunteerism.

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