



# MEDIA RELEASE

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Smithfield, VA Wins Top Honors in National America in Bloom Awards Program**

(COLUMBUS, OH): Honors for the prestigious 2012 America in Bloom (AIB) national awards program were announced at the annual awards held in Fayetteville, Arkansas on September 22.

America in Bloom executive director, Laura Kunkle, said, "America in Bloom participation is helping participating towns achieve their potential. The accomplishments and progress shown by this year's towns and cities is remarkable."

Smithfield, VA was judged on six criteria: overall impression, community involvement, environmental awareness, heritage, urban forestry, landscape, and floral displays, across four sectors: municipal, residential, commercial, and community involvement.

Specially trained judges visited towns of similar populations and spent two days touring each town, meeting municipal officials, residents, and volunteers. Additional competitors in this category were Coshocton, OH; Plymouth, IN; and Tarboro, NC.

Smithfield competed in the population category of 8,001 - 13,000, receiving a three bloom rating and a special award for the best historic walking tour.

The judges, Billy Butterfield and Jack Clasen, commented, "It is so good to see that the people in Smithfield work together. The collaboration between the Chamber of Commerce and the Isle of Wight/Smithfield Tourism Office is evident. The town seems responsive to the needs of the residents and business community. Improvements are being made everywhere and the town has a very bright future ahead."

Registrations for the 2013 national awards program can be submitted until February 28, 2013.

*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.*

For more information, visit [www.americainbloom.org](http://www.americainbloom.org).

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