

**Laura – please send this release on or before June 10 to the Gallipolis, OH press list.**

For immediate release.

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## **America in Bloom Judges Visit Gallipolis, OH**

Judges from the America in Bloom (AIB) national awards program will visit Gallipolis, OH on June 20 and 21. This is Gallipolis' eighth entry in the America in Bloom national awards program. They won their population category in 2011. The town is one of 28 towns across America working on local revitalization programs with the hopes of receiving a prestigious America in Bloom national award.

Gallipolis is competing against Echo, OR; Slippery Rock, PA; and Castle Rock, WA in the under 4,000 population category.

Judges are Dwight Lund and Alex Pearl.



Dwight Lund



Alex Pearl

**Dwight Lund** was born and raised in a family greenhouse business that started as a wholesale florist. Dwight, who lives in Warrenville, Illinois, attended the University of Illinois earning a BS degree in Floriculture. Over the next 40 years he held positions as grower, manager, partner and eventually president of the company. During the years the wholesale florist business evolved to a retail greenhouse, flower shop and garden center.

In addition Dwight spent 20 years in education teaching Horticulture classes at Kishwaukee Community College and DuPage Area Vocational Education Authority.

Lund commented, "The Gallipolis City Profile brings back many memories of my AIB visit in 2006. I look forward to seeing the changes."

**Alex Pearl**, Centerville, Ohio has been an AIB judge and among the group of founding individuals since the America in Bloom's inception. In fact, Alex was one of the judges during the pilot program in 2001. Alex is a retired Horticulture educator whose career has taken him in many different directions. He has held responsible positions in higher education, botanical gardens, private industry and in his own business. Alex holds degrees from the State University of New York, New Mexico State University, University of Delaware and The Ohio State University. He is an active member of various trade and amateur Horticultural organizations. His long association with in bloom programs through America in Bloom and the Canadian program Communities in Bloom has taken him to cities across both countries and Europe. He is a strong advocate for the benefits in bloom programs provide citizens and the overall communities. Alex's motto is 'plants changes lives'. Alex is honored to be a part of the America in Bloom program.

Pearl said, "Because Gallipolis has been in AIB for so many years, I'm looking forward to some great things."

Participants have opportunities to receive recognition in the following areas:

- Bloom rating
- Population category winner
- Outstanding achievement award – the “best of the best” over all participants in each of the six evaluated criteria.
- Special mention – for what the judges deem to be an extraordinary project or program.
- Community Champion
- YouTube Video
- Population category winners are invited to participate in international competition via the Communities in Bloom program in Canada.

To date, more than 200 towns and cities from 41 states have participated in the program and more than 20 million people have been touched by it. Awards will be announced on September 21, 2013 at AIB's National Symposium and Awards, held this year in Orlando, FL.

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America in Bloom is a non-profit 501c3 corporation whose mission is to promote nationwide beautification through education and community involvement by encouraging the use of flowers, plants, trees, and other environmental and lifestyle enhancements.