

**Laura – please send this release on or before June 1 to the Madisonville, KY press list.**

For immediate release.

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### **America in Bloom Judges Visit Madisonville, KY**

Judges from the America in Bloom (AIB) national awards program will visit Madisonville, KY on June 13 and 14. This is Madisonville's third entry in the America in Bloom national awards program. Last year, Madisonville won the America in Bloom YouTube video contest. 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.

Madisonville is competing against Calabasas, CA and Ottawa, IL in the 12,001 to 25,000 population category.

Judges are Bill Hahn and Jack Clasen, two of America in Bloom's most experienced judges.



Bill Hahn



Jack Clasen

**Bill Hahn** has served the city of Akron, Ohio for 34 years in various capacities. Since 1993 his title has been City Arborist and Horticulturist. Bill has received several citations for his work including Akron's winning the 2003 America in Bloom national competition for the 101,000-300,000 population category, Neptune Park Historic Restoration, and the Akron Noise Attenuation Project being featured by Scenic America as an "Environmental Solution" to highway noise.

Bill has been a registered Landscape Architect since 1984, and earned an Associates Degree in Ornamental Horticulture from Ohio State University in 1974. He is an environmental enthusiast, is well traveled, visiting many of the national, state and provincial parks, gardens, arboreta and nursery growers. He is member of ONLA, ISA, and Scenic America, serves on the Contest Committee of America in Bloom.

Hahn said, "I'm looking forward to visiting Madisonville as I enjoy seeing the progress of past participating communities."

Clasen, from Raleigh North Carolina, chairs the Contest Committee, the Judges Selection and Training Committee, and serves on America in Bloom's Board of Directors. He has been with America in Bloom (AIB) since its inception and has judged cities, universities, and business districts throughout the United States and international communities in Canada, Ireland, and Scotland.

As a Master Gardener, Jack is an avid volunteer. He co-founded Mason (Ohio) in Bloom, which participated in AIB in 2004 and 2005. Jack was a member of the Mason Tree Committee, vice president

of the Mason Library Board of Trustees, supervised the period landscape restoration at the Mason Historic Society, and chaired the annual “Art in the Garden” Tour.

Jack’s own garden has been on numerous garden tours, was selected by the Cincinnati Horticultural Society as one of the ten best amateur gardens in Cincinnati, filmed for Home and Garden TV’s Do-It-Yourself (DIY) Network, scouted by editors of Better Homes and Gardens Magazine, and featured in the October 2007, issue of Cincinnati Magazine.

Clasen commented, “Reviewing the Madisonville, Kentucky website has really peaked my interest for our judging visit. The AIB video tour on the city’s website home page gives an outstanding overview of what the city is accomplishing with AIB participation.”

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.
- Population category winners are invited to participate in international competition via the Communities in Bloom program in Canada.
- Community Champion
- YouTube Video

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.