

Laura – please send this release on or before June 1 to the Tarboro press list.

For immediate release.

For more information, contact Laura Kunkle (614-487-1117) aib@ofa.org

www.americainbloom.org

America in Bloom Judges Visit Tarboro, NC

Judges from the America in Bloom (AIB) national awards program will visit Tarboro NC on June 17 and 18. This is Tarboro's second entry in the America in Bloom national awards program. 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.

Tarboro is competing against Demopolis, AL and Coshocton, OH in the 7,001 to 12,000 population category.

Judges are Ed Hooker and Jim Abraham.



Ed Hooker



Jim Abraham

Ed Hooker is the historic architect for Fort Riley, Kansas. After graduating from Auburn University with a degree in architecture, Ed began his career in historic preservation with the Alabama Historical Commission, the Alabama State Historic Preservation Office, where he worked with communities to realize the potential of their threatened historic landmarks. He later was the historic architect for the Mobile Historic Development Commission, where he staffed the city's Architectural Review Board and provided preservation guidance and architectural design assistance to residents of Mobile's 8 historic districts.

Hooker commented, "I'm excited to tour the largest official Historic District in North Carolina, and hear how the community has woven history, arts and entertainment and recreation seamlessly in a way that allows Tarboro's residents to live, work and play throughout diverse historic neighborhoods."

James Abraham grew up in southern Indiana and has spent 35 years in the historic preservation profession. Fifteen years ago he moved to Savannah, Georgia, to serve as the project manager for the restoration of the city's Lucas Theatre. Since 2002, Jim has taught for the Savannah College of Art and Design as a professor of historic preservation. Hundreds of students have worked with Jim on various projects, including commercial, civic, residential, and religious structures that have all positively impacted the revitalization of Savannah's Landmark Historic District.

Throughout his life, Jim has been an avid gardener, in both the Midwest and South, and takes particular pride in his hybrid tea roses. Living in Savannah, a park city with a rich landscaping tradition, has furthered his appreciation of the importance of beautifying downtowns to enhance urban life.

Jim's work in preservation, along with his service in the Indiana State Senate, has given him experience with non-profit organizations as well as governmental and regulatory agencies.

Abraham said, "I very much look forward to visiting Tarboro and seeing all of the beautiful general landscape and plantings. As a lifelong gardener I certainly appreciate the hard work that is required to create quality landscapes".

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.