

## **America in Bloom Judges to Visit Holland MI, July 29-30,2014**

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# Holland *in Bloom*

*Celebrating the Pride Planted  
in Our Community*

Judges from the America in Bloom (AIB) national awards program will visit Holland, MI on July 29 and 30, 2014. This is Holland's fourth entry in the America in Bloom national awards program, and the city is one of 33 entries across America. Holland is competing with Winter Park, FL; Santa Paul, CA; and Henderson County, NC in the 24,001 to 50,000 population category.

Participants are evaluated in the following areas: overall impression, heritage preservation, environmental efforts, urban forestry, landscapes, and floral displays. The judges evaluate these criteria the residential, commercial, municipal, and community involvement sectors.

Judges this year are Linda Cromer and Jack Clasen.

**Linda Cromer** has served her community, Greendale, Indiana, in a variety of political positions including Planning Commissioner, Chairperson of the Park Board and Tree Board, and Housing Authority Commissioner. She sits on the Executive Boards and plays an active role in the efforts of several national and state non-profit organizations dedicated to social justice and environmental issues.

Linda received a fine arts education at the University of Kansas. Owner and operator of a floral shop and greenhouse for over a decade, she has spent the bulk of her professional life traveling as an International Representative for a labor organization, and has used those travel opportunities to audit design and horticulture classes at a number of universities, and to study the diversity and individuality of public gardens and the communities where they are located.

Linda is past president and active member of the Greendale, Indiana Garden Club and first spearheaded her community's participation in the America In Bloom Program in 2005.

**Jack Clasen** has been with America in Bloom (AIB) since its inception, judging communities, universities, and business districts throughout the United States. In 2009 he was the international representative for AIB judging towns in Canada, Ireland, and Scotland.

Jack is head of the AIB National Awards/ Contest Committee, serves as judge coordinator, and is a member of the AIB Board of Directors.

As a Master Gardener Jack is an avid volunteer. He co-founded "Mason in Bloom" (OH), chaired the annual "Art in the Garden Tour", and spearheaded Mason's participated in AIB in 2004 and 2005.

Jack's own garden was selected as one of the ten best amateur gardens in Cincinnati, filmed for Home and Garden TV's DIY Network, scouted by editors of "Better Homes and Gardens", and featured in the October 2007, issue of Cincinnati Magazine.

Participants in the AIB national program 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 Award

The City of Holland has received a 5-bloom rating and won its population category in each of the past three years. The City received the Outstanding Achievement Award for Tidiness (now called Overall Impression) in 2011, Environmental Efforts in 2012, and Heritage Preservation in 2013, as well as a special award for the Best Community Garden Program in 2012. The City was also honored with the “Circle of Champions” designation in 2012, by virtue of having won a combination of three population and/or criteria awards over the first two years of participation.

To date, more than 220 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 October 4 at AIB’s National Symposium and Awards, held this year in Philadelphia, PA.

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### Supporting Documents

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