



MEDIA RELEASE

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Arroyo Grande, California's America in Bloom Awards Results Announced

(COLUMBUS, OH): Top honors for the prestigious 2015 America in Bloom national awards program were announced at the annual awards held in Holland, Michigan on September 26.

All participants were evaluated on six criteria: overall impression, environmental awareness, heritage preservation, urban forestry, landscape, and floral displays. Additionally they were judged on their community involvement across municipal, residential, and commercial sectors. America in Bloom is the only national awards program that sends specially trained judges to personally visit participants. In addition, each participant receives a detailed written evaluation that can be used as a guide to future improvements.

Arroyo Grande received a five bloom rating out of a possible five blooms.

Local resident Mary Hertel received the national Community Champion award for her outstanding efforts in propelling Arroyo Grande's AIB program participation to new heights.

They also received a special award for "Public Art that Celebrates Heritage."

In addition, Arroyo Grande received a special mention for the town's overall heritage preservation activities.

Bill Hahn & Ed Hooker, AIB judges, visited communities of similar populations and spent two days touring each town, meeting municipal officials, residents, and volunteers. Other competitors in the circle of champions category for mid-sized communities were Estes Park, CO; Washington, MO; and Holland, MI. This year AIB established a new champions category of competition reserved for those that have won their population size category multiple times in past years.

The judges noted, "Arroyo Grande has a very successful Architectural Review Board that protects its cultural resources and assists property owners in the preservation of the historic resources of the historic district within the Village. Easy to interpret design review guidelines address everything from minor renovations to additions to site improvements. New construction is compatible within the historic context. Through carefully planned development, Arroyo Grande has maintained its vintage charm and above average property values."

America in Bloom executive director, Laura Kunkle, said, "America in Bloom is helping towns and cities of all sizes achieve their potential. Every year our participants raise the bar, and the

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accomplishments and progress shown by this year's group is again remarkable. These are, without a doubt, some of the best places to live in America.”

Congratulations to Arroyo Grande!

Registrations for the 2016 national awards program can be submitted until February 28, 2016. Eligible participants include towns, cities, college and university campuses, business districts, military installations, and recognized neighborhoods of large cities.

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.

For more information, visit www.AmericaInBloom.org.

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