

**Laura – please send this release on or before June 5 to the Slippery Rock press list.**

For immediate release.

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## **America in Bloom Judges Visit Slippery Rock, PA**

Judges from the America in Bloom (AIB) national awards program will visit Slippery Rock, PA on June 17 and 18. This is Slippery Rock's second entry in the America in Bloom national awards program. Echo has twice won its population category. 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.

Slippery Rock is competing against Echo, OR; Gallipolis, OH; 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, " Slippery Rock in Bloom has posted regular entries and pictures on Facebook. The red tulips will be gone by the time we arrive but the pictures online are extraordinary. Thank you for keeping me in the loop."

**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. His 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, "We got a glimpse of Slippery Rocks' citizens' enthusiasm for the community when we attended the AIB symposium last September and we look forward to what Slippery Rock in Bloom has accomplished this year."

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.