

May 2016

*Fellow America in Bloom (AIB) judge **Pam Turrell** and I want to extend our thanks and appreciation to all the Saratoga in Bloom participants who made our visit to your community so memorable. The level of involvement and cooperation on the part of dedicated residents in so many different groups in an ongoing effort to beautify your community is truly inspiring. Thank you for putting together such an informative look at your town.*

*In particular, the efforts of individual boy scouts on multiple different components of the Quarry Park project were unique in our judging experience and very noteworthy. We also would like to commend the Village Gardeners on their efforts to keep downtown "blooming." We enjoyed the glimpses into Saratoga's past at the Historical Foundation buildings and the heritage trees at the historic town cemetery. Other highlights of our broad ranging tour also included the lovely surprise of welcoming elementary school artwork downtown featuring the Saratoga red geranium, the teaching garden on school grounds, and tours of Hakone Gardens and Montalvo.*

*Saratoga was our first stop in this year's round of AIB evaluations. Other contestants in the 30,000 to 50,000 population category include the communities of Henderson County, NC; St. Charles, IL; and Midland, MI. A winner in this category will be announced in early Oct. 2016 in Arroyo Grande, CA at the annual AIB symposium and awards ceremony. Results of our written review will be shared with Saratoga in Bloom members and city officials after the awards ceremony.*

**Karin Rindal**