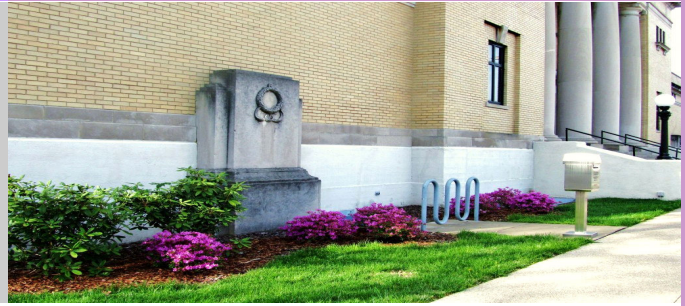


Mount Vernon Azalea Committee- Branch of the Southwest Azalea Trail Organization



In 2010 a group from Mount Vernon, interested in azaleas and the beautification of our city, met with Azalea Trail committees from Pike and Gibson counties. With the addition of Posey County, a three County Azalea Trail committee was developed. Our mission is to beautify the city, raise community health awareness through exercise, promote tourism, and make Mount Vernon a more desirable place to live.

As a beginning in 2010, we mailed approximately 100 letters to local businesses requesting donations which would be used to plant azaleas or other flowers in our city. The response rate was 35% and we purchased 100 plants including azaleas, rhododendrons and roses that were planted on public property in Mount Vernon. We then received a grant, as part of the three counties, from Connect South West Indiana, for 200 azaleas along with mulch. These also were planted on non-profit or public property. We spent 2011 maintaining the beautiful plants.

In 2012 the Mount Vernon City Council awarded the Azalea Committee up to \$2,000 to develop azalea walking trails. Two trails, each 1.1 mile, beginning at the riverfront, running through the Downtown Historic District and through the Welborn Historic District, have been established. The first trail, the "pink" azalea trail, begins at the Main and Water intersection then travels to 8th Street and returns to the riverfront via Walnut Street. The second trail, the "white" azalea trail, begins at the Mulberry and Water intersection then travels to 8th Street and returns to the riverfront via Locust Street. Each trail has round marker signs posted on street signs indicating mileage and direction. At the Riverfront there will also be a "red" azalea trail, consisting of approximately .6 mile. Markers along the riverfront sidewalks will indicate distance walked. Future plans for the riverfront include a large sign with detailed maps and information about the walking trails.

An azalea sale was conducted this spring. The proceeds were used for upkeep of the city plantings, and to create a "field of daffodils" at the riverfront. The next azalea sale will be held in April, 2013. The committee is hoping for the community to participate in creating azalea displays throughout the city and countryside, showcasing our city.

The Mount Vernon Garden Club, along with the Azalea Committee, purchased 300 daffodil bulbs. These bulbs were planted by the Azalea Committee in October of 2012. Look for the daffodils and experience this springtime beauty on the riverfront east "tree" terrace.

An application is pending for Mount Vernon to become certified as an official "Azalea City". The committee is excited about improving the life of our citizens by offering beauty, exercise and a sense of community.

Following are the names of our current committee members:
Brenda Ketcham, Mary Ann Fuelling, Ann Simpson, Judy Heberer, Diane Heberer, Marge Bostick, Judy Moore, Phyllis Levin, Nancy Case and Marcie Miller

