

# City of Mary Esther Yard of the Month:

The Mary Esther Beautification Committee will be sponsoring a perpetual, self-governed yard of the month. The purpose of the program is to recognize City of Mary Esther residents who demonstrate above-average efforts in maintaining their property, thereby contributing to the overall appearance of the community at large.

Each resident may nominate any yard in the Mary Esther city limits including their own by sending an e-mail to [maryesthergardens@aol.com](mailto:maryesthergardens@aol.com) or simply drop the nomination information off at Mary Esther City Hall Monday - Friday 8AM to 5PM at front desk or in payment drop box. When submitting a nomination provide the following information; Address, name and contact information of property nominated with a brief sentence or two why the nominee should be selected as Yard of the Month. Nominations must also have name and contact information of person(s) nominating.

If no nominations are received by the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month, the Mary Esther Beautification Committee will nominate and select the award winner. The selection committee will consist of a city representative and other city residents and gardeners.

All award winners receive an official Yard of the Month lawn sign, to be placed on their property for the duration of their award month. Position of the sign should be midway between the street and the front of the house. Yard of the Month winners must be willing to have photos taken and will be recognized on the City of Mary Esther website, Facebook page and marquee.

The Mary Esther Beautification Committee congratulates all Yard of the Month award selections and encourages all neighbors to join the efforts of these homeowners in keeping their yards and homes beautiful. Thank you.

The judges will use the following criteria when choosing a Yard of the Month. These are only guidelines and the committee will make a final decision based on the evidence that shows the homeowner's pride in his or her yard.

## **Contest Guidelines**

- All residential properties within the city limits are automatically eligible.
- Award winners are selected based on the recommended judging criteria listed below.
- The upkeep of the yard can reflect the efforts of the residents themselves or that of a professional landscaper or groundskeeper.
- An award duration term lasts a single calendar month, and runs from the first day to the last day of that same month.
- The same property cannot receive more than one award in a 12-month calendar period. At least 12 months must elapse between awards for the same yard.
- While an individual's home is being recognized as a "Yard of the Month," they are expected to maintain their yard in the same manner that allowed them to win the title.
- The same property cannot receive more than one award in the same rolling 12 month calendar period.

### **Recommended Judging Criteria**

- Yard of the Month candidates are judged solely on the total exterior appearance of their property and front yard as viewed from the street or driveway.
- Factors include overall appearance, tidiness and neatness of the front of the property as evidenced by pruned, trimmed and shaped natural foliage, edged and defined lawns, borders & flower beds (no silk flowers) and a visually appealing façade.
- Lawns should be healthy with no bare spots or excessive weeds. Grass shall be mowed and trimmed including around fences and foundation.
- Flower beds should be weeded with efforts to include new flowers, shrubs, etc.
- Evening appearance after dusk including lighting and safety lighting help make properties stand out.

Summary note: While lack of strict adherence to the criteria above does not necessarily result in disqualification, these principles offer general guidelines that should be recognized by the Yard of the Month program.

The Mary Esther Beautification Committee is dedicated to improving the quality of living and appearance of our community. We encourage residents to take pride in their homes and neighborhood. In turn, we look to celebrate those who do a superior job in maintaining their yards in such a way that they enhance the overall curb appeal of the entire community. Yards of the Month are awarded at the beginning of each calendar month.

### **Winners will receive:**

A specially designed "Yard of the Month" sign placed in the winning front yard for one month, a certificate of recognition to the homeowner signed by the Mayor and given at a Council meeting.