

Lewis, a pal to pollinators, recognized with 2024 Green Award



If you've been to Hillary House over the holidays, you've been wowed by the natural, evergreen-driven Christmas decorations that have become synonymous with the season at Aurora's only National Historic Site.

The boughs and bows assembled there are the work of Donna Lewis and her team at Garden Aurora.

Earlier this year, Lewis was recognized by the Town of Aurora with the 2024 Green Award, part of the Town's Community Recognition Awards program, for her advocacy work that made all the more visible by her monarch butterfly-themed wardrobe she often deploys to promote the importance of pollinators.

The award was presented in Council Chambers by Ward 3 Councillor Wendy Gaertner, following an introduction by Mayor Tom Mrakas, who noted each year's recipient is an individual or organization that supports the protection, preservation, sustainability, or conservation of our natural environment.

"This award celebrates those who share the Town's commitment to creating a greener community," he said. "Tonight, we present the Green Award to Donna Lewis. Donna Lewis, a leading advocate in Aurora, has driven growth and promoted gardening education as president of Garden Aurora since 2017. She focuses on native plants, invasive species removal, and trumpeter swan protection.

"Donna educates families on eco-friendly gardening at local events such as the Aurora Farmers' Market" and works with the Historical Society for sustainable landscaping for Hillary House.

Lewis was succinct in accepting the award.

"Thank you for the award, I greatly appreciate it," she said. "I volunteer because I can. Anyone can be a superhero and help keep the environment green. It doesn't matter how old you are or how young you are, I just hope I can make a difference and I am looking forward to continuing to help out all the different organizations I already help with."

By Brock Weir