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The Cherry Blossoms

Washington DC

1986

**NATIONAL CHERRY
BLOSSOM FESTIVAL**

Each year the blooming of the famous Japanese cherry blossoms marks the unofficial beginning of spring in our Nation's Capital when hundreds of thousands of people visit Washington to enjoy their beauty. The most popular display may be seen in the massed planting of cherry trees that encircle the Tidal Basin in West Potomac Park. In this picturesque setting the blossoms produce the effect of white and pink clouds banked around the basin. Another display is in the 2 miles along the roadside in East Potomac Park.

History

About a month after President William Howard Taft took office on March 4, 1909, Mrs. Taft became interested in planting Japanese cherry trees in Potomac Park. Dr. Jokichi Takamine, the Japanese chemist famous as the discoverer of adrenalin, was visiting in Washington at that time and learned of Mrs. Taft's interest. Through his efforts, the Mayor of Tokyo, Yukio Ozaki, presented the gift of cherry trees in 1912 on behalf of that city to the City of Washington as a gesture of friendship. Each spring the blooming of these trees is a recurring gift, which becomes appreciated more and more each year.

The gift of 3,000 cherry trees of 12 varieties was shipped from Yokohama on board the S.S. *Awa Maru* on February 14, 1912. Upon arrival in Seattle, they were transferred to insulated freight cars for shipment to Washington; they arrived on March 25.

Around the Tidal Basin

At present, approximately 650 cherry trees line the Tidal Basin; 90 percent of these are Yoshino and 10 percent Akebono, which has single, pale-pink blossoms. The Yoshino, one of the favorite cultivated cherry trees of Japan, was developed about 1870. The beauty of this tree is in its great profusion of white, single blossoms. The Akebono is a seedling sport selection of Yoshino, developed by a nursery in this country in 1920. It has deep-pink buds, which open into delicate pale-pink, single blossoms, whereas the Yoshino has light-pink buds that open into white, single blossoms. The Yoshino and Akebono varieties bloom at the same time and are among the earliest in spring. The Akebono blossoms provide an attractive tint of pink to the dominant white Yoshino blossoms around the Tidal Basin. Together they provide a beautiful setting for the stately Thomas Jefferson Memorial.

In East Potomac Park

East Potomac Park occupies an island extending 2 miles downstream in the Potomac River, southeast of the Tidal Basin. Cherry trees are prominently featured in its landscaping and more than 1,800 trees of the following varieties are now planted here: Kwanzan, Taki-nioi, Higan, Beni-Higan, Jugatsu-sakura, Prunus subhirtella Pendula, and Yoshino.

Time of Blooming

The date when the buds open varies from year to year, depending on weather conditions. It is impossible to make an accurate prediction on the blooming dates of the cherry trees earlier than 10 days prior to their bursting into full bloom. Since 1924, the Yoshino has twice come into full bloom as early as March 20, and once as late as April 17, with the average date being April 5. Twice since 1924 the Kwanzan has burst into bloom as early as April 14 and twice as late as May 1; the average has been April 22.

The Cherry Blossom Festival

The original planting of Japanese cherry trees on the Tidal Basin was commemorated first in 1927, when Washington school children reenacted the event, and in 1934 by a 3-day celebration sponsored by the District of Columbia Commissioners. The next year many civic groups joined forces to produce the "Cherry Blossom Festival."

Interrupted only by World War II, the annual festival has grown steadily in scope and popularity. In 1940 a pageant was introduced. In 1948 Cherry Blossom Princesses were selected from every State in the Union and the Territories, and from these princesses a queen was chosen to reign during the festival. Now featuring many outstanding attractions, the National Cherry Blossom Festival is officially opened by the lighting of an ancient ceremonial Japanese lantern.

Japanese Lantern

Adding oriental charm to the Japanese cherry tree display at the Tidal Basin is the Japanese Lantern presented to the City of Washington by the Governor of Tokyo on March 30, 1954. It commemorates the Centennial of Commodore Perry's historic mission to Japan. The lantern, made of granite, is 8½ feet high, weighs 6,000 pounds, and is about 300 years old.

*"Under the cherry blossoms,
all people become friends."*

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NATIONAL CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL

April 6-12, 1986

The National Cherry Blossom Festival, now in its 59th year, is consistently rated one of the nation's top events. The weeklong Festival celebrates the coming of spring, the beauty of Washington, D.C. and America's friendship with Japan.

Each year, more than 500,000 tourists make plans to visit the nation's capital during Cherry Blossom time.

1986 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

JAPANESE LANTERN LIGHTING CEREMONY

SUNDAY, APRIL 6

4:00 PM - 6:00 PM

This traditional ceremony features the lighting of the huge Japanese Lantern near the Jefferson Memorial. The lantern, hand-carved from granite, dates from the 17th century. It was a gift from the Governor of Tokyo in 1954.



The ceremonial lighting of the lantern is a Japanese custom to mark the coming of spring. U.S. and Japanese dignitaries attend the event, and the 1986 Cherry Blossom Princesses will be making their public debut. Traditional Japanese music groups perform. Free and open to the public.

Location: Tidal Basin (West Basin Drive & Independence Ave, NW). **Sponsors:** National Conference of State Societies (NCSS), National Park Service (NPS) and Embassy of Japan. **Contact:** Public Affairs, NPS (202) 426-6700

CONNECTICUT CONNECTION WELCOMING CEREMONY

MONDAY, APRIL 7 12 NOON-1:30 PM

The 56 Cherry Blossom Princesses are transported down Connecticut Avenue in a giant "chariot," led by a local marching band. Their destination is the Connecticut Connection, where a grand welcoming ceremony awaits. Members from the D.C. City Government and representatives from the White House and the Embassy of Japan attend the festivities.



Each Cherry Blossom Princess is introduced, and musical groups perform. Free and open to the public.

Location: 1101 Connecticut Ave., NW (Connecticut & L Sts., NW). **Sponsor:** Connecticut Connection. **Contact:** Judith Miller, (202) 783-1107.

CHERRY BLOSSOM NOON HOUR CONCERTS

MONDAY, APRIL 7, 11:30 AM-1:30 PM
WED, APRIL 9 & FRIDAY, APRIL 11

The sweet sounds of jazz, soft rock, blues, reggae and country bands fill the air in parks throughout the city. For locations and names of bands, call the National Park Service at (202) 426-6700.

ACACIA CHERRY BLOSSOM TENNIS CLASSIC

MONDAY, APRIL 7 7:00 PM-10:00 PM



Tennis superstars Boris Becker and Guillermo Vilas will play an exhibition match to benefit the Special Olympics. The match will be followed by a five-game doubles match between Becker, Vilas and two local Special Olympians.



The event is sponsored by the Acacia Group, and was arranged by the sports management/marketing firm of Advantage International. Tickets will be available at all Ticket Center outlets; call (202) 432-0200.

Location: George Washington University, Smith Center, 600 22nd Street, NW.

GALA FASHION SHOW & LUNCHEON

TUESDAY, APRIL 8 11 AM-1 PM

This popular social event features the latest fashions by a well-known designer and a gala luncheon. The 1986 Cherry Blossom Festival Princesses will attend.

Open to the public, but tickets must be purchased in advance. For tickets or more information, call Mary Sarosdy at (703) 425-5652.

Location: Regency Ballroom, The Shoreham Hotel, 2500 Calvert Street, NW. **Sponsor:** National Conference of State Societies (NCSS).

CONNECTICUT CONNECTION TRIBUTE

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9 12 NOON-1:30 PM

"East Meets West," as the Connecticut Connection hosts a lavish tribute to the arts and cultures of America and Japan. Fashion shows, dances, music presentations, theater scenes and more will be held in the Outdoor Arcade. Free and open to the public.

Location: 1101 Connecticut Avenue, NW (Connecticut & L Streets, NW). **Sponsor:** Connecticut Connection. **Contact:** Judith Miller, (202) 783-1107.

CHERRY BLOSSOM PADDLE BOAT REGATTA

THURSDAY, APRIL 10 2:30 PM-4:30 PM

Boat racing around the Tidal Basin, featuring the 1986 Cherry Blossom Princesses and local celebrities. Several timed races will be held, with prizes going to the best teams.

Spectators can enjoy fun, food and the sounds of a top local band. Free and open to the public.

Location: Eastern Tidal Basin, Jefferson Memorial. **Sponsors:** National Conference of State Societies (NCSS) and the National Park Service (NPS). **Contact:** Public Affairs, NPS, (202) 426-6700.

CONNECTICUT CONNECTION TRIBUTE

FRIDAY, APRIL 11 12 NOON-1:30 PM

"East Meets West," as the Connecticut Connection continues its lavish tribute to the arts and cultures of America and Japan. Fashion shows, dances, music presentations, theater scenes and more will be held in the Outdoor Arcade. Free and open to the public.

Location: 1101 Connecticut Avenue, NW (Connecticut & L Streets, NW). **Sponsor:** Connecticut Connection. **Contact:** Judith Miller, (202) 783-1107.

CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL GRAND BALL

FRIDAY, APRIL 11 8:00 PM-1:00 AM

This gala affair culminates in the moment when one of the Cherry Blossom Festival Princesses is crowned Queen. Last year's Queen assists the Ambassador of Japan in placing the priceless Mikimoto Crown on the new Queen's head.

One of the city's major social events, the Grand Ball features a big band, dancing, colorful decorations and a light buffet. All of the 1986 Cherry Blossom Festival Princesses attend the elegant party held in their honor.

Open to the public, but tickets must be purchased in advance. For tickets or more information, call Donald A. Hampson, Jr. at (703) 692-9190 or (703) 494-1743.

Location: Regency Ballroom, The Shoreham Hotel, 2500 Calvert Street, NW. **Sponsor:** National Conference of State Societies (NCSS).



NATIONAL CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL PARADE

SATURDAY, APRIL 12 12:30 PM-2:30 PM

The parade, sponsored by the Downtown Jayces and broadcast each year via national television, continues to be the largest spectator event in the nation's capital. Guest celebrity MC's provide commentary as more than 25 marching bands, huge floats, crack drill teams and the 1986 Cherry Blossom Festival Princesses parade in style down Constitution Avenue.

This year's Cherry Blossom Queen will ride in a spectacular float of the parade.

Tickets for grandstand seating (\$9.75 each) can be purchased in advance by calling the Downtown Jayces. Tickets will also be sold in the grandstand area the day of the parade. However, anyone can stand and watch the parade.

Location: Constitution Avenue, NW (from 7th Street to 17th Street). **Sponsor:** Downtown Jayces. **Contact:** Advance Ticket Sales, (202) 296-8675.

CHERRY BLOSSOM PARADE AWARDS

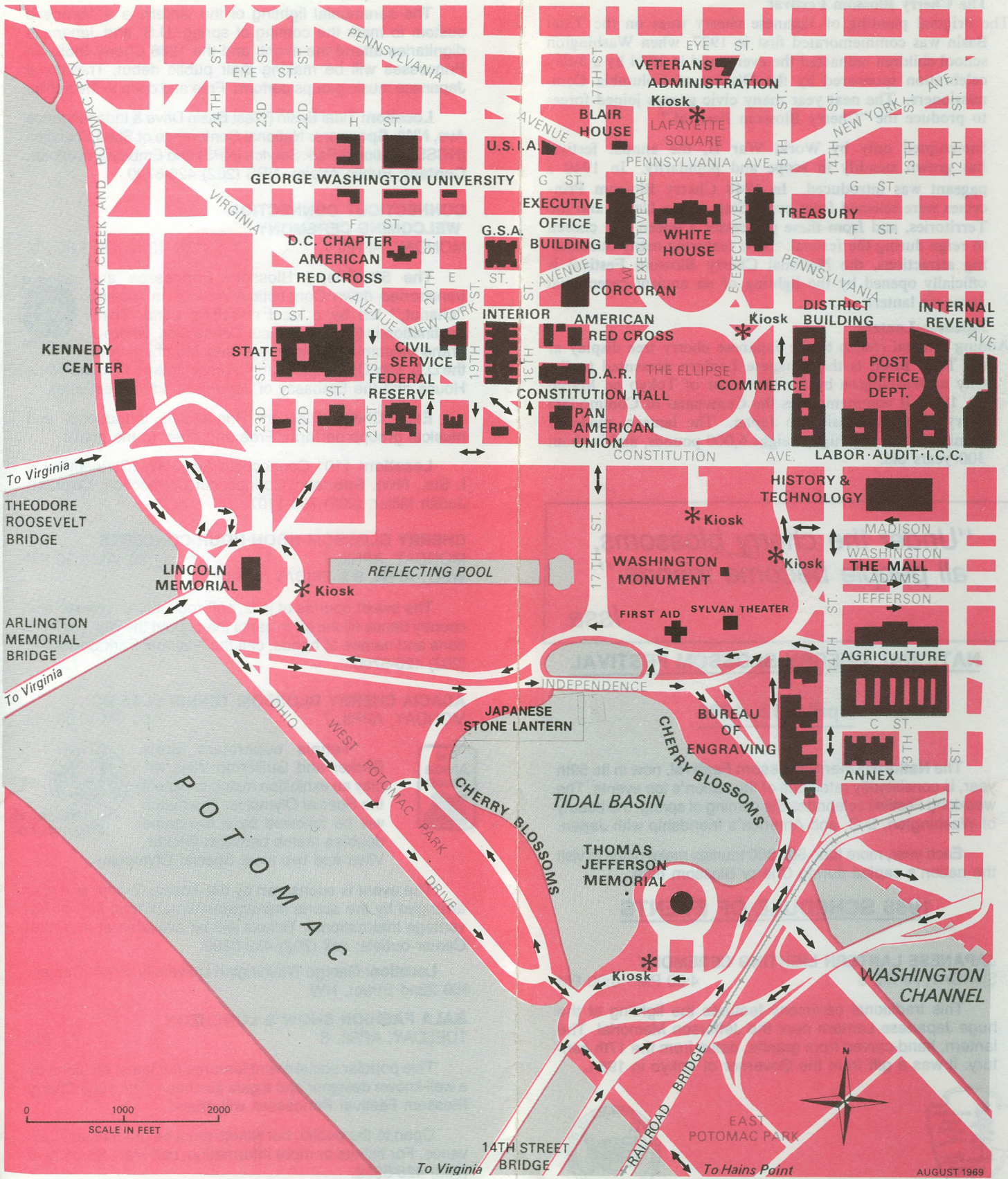
SATURDAY, APRIL 12 4:30 PM-5:30 PM

The best bands and floats of the Parade will be honored during a special ceremony.

Location: Pavilion at the Old Post Office Building (1100 Pennsylvania Ave. NW). **Sponsors:** Downtown Jayces and Old Post Office. **Contact:** Pavilion office. 289-4224.

The **National Cherry Blossom Festival** is organized and run each year by the **Greater Washington Cherry Blossom Festival Committee**. The Committee, comprised entirely of volunteers, is a nonprofit corporation that was formed to promote and support the activities of the Festival. The Committee is assisted in its efforts by funding from a number of national and local businesses.

For more information about the **National Cherry Blossom Festival**, or for maps and brochures about visiting the nation's capital, please contact: The Washington Convention & Visitors Association, 1575 Eye Street, NW (Suite 250), Washington, D.C. 20005; (202) 789-7000 or the National Park Service, 1100 Ohio Drive, SW, Washington, D.C. 20242; (202) 426-6700.



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 INTERIOR AMERICAN RED CROSS
 D.A.R. THE ELLIPSE
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 DISTRICT BUILDING
 INTERNAL REVENUE
 KENNEDY CENTER
 STATE ST. CIVIL SERVICE FEDERAL RESERVE
 CONSTITUTION HALL
 PAN AMERICAN UNION
 POST OFFICE DEPT.
 LABOR-AUDIT-I.C.C.
 THEODORE ROOSEVELT BRIDGE
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 MADISON
 WASHINGTON THE MALL ADAMS
 JEFFERSON
 AGRICULTURE
 ANNEX
 ARLINGTON MEMORIAL BRIDGE
 OHIO WEST POTOMAC PARK DRIVE
 JAPANESE STONE LANTERN
 TIDAL BASIN
 THOMAS JEFFERSON MEMORIAL
 WASHINGTON CHANNEL
 CHERRY BLOSSOMS
 BUREAU OF ENGRAVING
 POTSOMAC
 CHERRY BLOSSOMS
 Kiosk
 EAST POTOMAC PARK
 RAILROAD BRIDGE
 14TH STREET BRIDGE
 17TH ST. 15TH ST. 14TH ST. 13TH ST. 12TH ST.
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