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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

APRIL'S BLOOMING AMAZING AT NORFOLK BOTANICAL GARDEN *An Azalea Celebration kicks off with flora, fauna and fun*

Norfolk, VA (March 20, 2009) – Everything changes rapidly at Norfolk Botanical Garden (NBG) as the calendar flips to April.

- Hours extend to 7:00 PM daily.
- Azalea blooms explode with waves of colorful beauty.
- Fountains turn on and turn up the fun.
- Bike Nights begin again • 4-7 PM every Monday, Wednesday and Thursday.
- The Garden Café opens for patio lunches and garden picnic fare.
- The resident bald eagles unleash a flurry of activity as they tend to their young.
- Free trams run every hour with stops to allow exploration of all 155 acres.

NBG has the largest collection of azaleas on the east coast. These 250,000 azaleas put on a month-long show almost as dramatic as fireworks. People often wonder when the “peak” time is for azaleas to bloom. There are so many different types of azaleas and each variety has their own peak times that vary with the weather. But, the show will offer continuous blooms from late March through early May.

NBG is offering many ways to enjoy the azaleas.

- **Special Azalea Guided Tram Tours** – Enjoy this *free* narrated ride around historic Mirror Lake to see some of our oldest azaleas and to hear the story of how, why and who planted them.
- **Azalea Arrangement Demonstrations** - Learn how to quickly and easily arrange and display the beautiful azalea blooms found in your yard. *Free* demonstrations are every Monday in April at 11AM and 1 PM. These flowers can easily take center stage in your home with very little effort.

- **Encore Azalea Tour** – Take a leisurely self-guided tour of all 23 varieties of Encore Azaleas. Encores are repeat bloomers in summer and fall. This tour will help homeowners to compare and select their favorite Encores to plant in their own yards.
- **Gardener’s Favorite Azalea Picks** – The “What’s in Bloom” display in the Visitor Center will highlight the gardener’s favorite blooms of the week. A map and directions will help you find them in the Garden.

Special Events are the crowning touch in April’s Azalea Celebration.

- **Grapevine** – Wednesday, April 22 • 6-9 PM
This annual spring garden event features the live music of the Rhondels with ‘Shag’ demonstrations and dancing on the terrace. Great wines, beer, hors d’oeuvres and desserts will be served. Party-goers will also enjoy meandering through the azaleas on the Sunset Tram Tours.
- **WPA Memorial Garden Dedication** – Wednesday, April 29 • 10 AM
The community is invited to the dedication of a new garden built to honor the 220 workers who cleared the land and planted the original azaleas in 1938. Celebrate this significant part of Norfolk and African American history as the garden’s centerpiece sculpture is unveiled.

Before April ends, the grand finale of this Azalea Celebration will bring;

- **NEW** boats that will be ready to launch in May.
- The garden’s ‘Norfolk Mermaid’ comes home to flaunt her ‘Azalea Makeover’ in royal style.

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About Norfolk Botanical Garden

Norfolk Botanical Garden represents an oasis of over 30 theme gardens encompassing 155 beautiful acres. From signature plant collections to *WOW- World of Wonders: A Children’s Adventure Garden*, this diverse natural beauty can be explored by tram, boat or walking tours.

Norfolk Botanical Garden is accredited by the American Association of Museums, is recognized as a Virginia Historic Landmark and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. For more information, visit www.norfolkbotanicalgarden.org.