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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – January 2009**

**GARDEN OF LIGHTS REVENUE AND DONATIONS ROSE**

*More Than the Lights Were Bright at Norfolk Botanical Garden*

Garden of Lights (GOL), the annual holiday light show at Norfolk Botanical Garden (NBG) is the Garden's major fundraising event. With the worry of the economy and five fewer calendar days than normal between Thanksgiving and New Year's Eve, reaching the revenue goal seemed lofty.

Early in December, NBG decided to extend GOL for three extra days through January 3. Special Holiday Tram tours were added each Tuesday evening in hopes of alleviating the disappointment of callers unable to obtain tickets for the popular Polar Express.

GOL visitors conveyed gratitude for having the family tradition to look forward to. Marcia Riley, GOL Project Director said, "The feedback from the public was so encouraging. Everyone loves to tell you which displays are their favorites." They are always excited to see new light designs and wrapped trees, but this year, the ritual of driving through GOL was important.

The cars showed up every night, causing Garden employees to keep their fingers crossed and be nervously optimistic for a profitable run. When the lights turned off and the total key was hit on the calculator, the result was remarkable.

**The total exceeded the revenue goal by 13%.** Revenue was up and even donations for children's educational programming far exceeded all of the previous year's donations. Times may be tough, but spirits were bright at the Garden of Lights.

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**About Norfolk Botanical Garden**

Norfolk Botanical Garden has one of the largest collections of azaleas, camellias and roses on the East Coast, 30 themed gardens and kids' favorite World of Wonders: A Children's Adventure Garden. This 155-acre oasis is the only garden that you can experience by foot, boat or tram.

Information about NBG gardens, plants, events and classes can be found on the new website [www.norfolkbotanicalgarden.org](http://www.norfolkbotanicalgarden.org).

**About Polar Express**

Polar Express is an amazing family holiday experience that sells out a few weeks after registration opens on October 1<sup>st</sup> each year. It's so popular it's not even advertised outside of the NBG website and member program guides. This year it sold out in a week.