

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the National Cherry Blossom Festival is the annual commemoration of the gift in 1912 of 3,000 cherry trees to the people of the United States by Mayor Yukio Ozaki of Tokyo as a memorial of national friendship between the United States and Japan and a celebration of the close relationship between the peoples of the two nations; and

WHEREAS, in 1965 another gift of 3,800 cherry trees was presented to First Lady Bird Johnson; and

WHEREAS, the National Cherry Blossom Festival is coordinated by the National Cherry Blossom Festival, Inc., a coalition of business, civic, and government organizations; and

WHEREAS, the National Cherry Blossom Festival, Inc., has sponsored the selection of a Cherry Blossom Festival Queen each year since 1949 from among American students of the Japanese language and other Japanese studies at colleges and universities throughout the United States; and

WHEREAS, during the 1996 Cherry Blossom Festival, the festival's sponsors presented the City with a mature Yoshino cherry tree that was planted at Alexandria's Waterfront Park on the banks of the Potomac River; and

WHEREAS, each year, more than 600,000 visitors come to the Washington area, including historic Alexandria, to see the cherry blossoms and celebrate the beginning of spring; and

WHEREAS, Alexandria, Virginia, extends its hospitality to visitors from Japan and other countries of the world for the National Cherry Blossom Festival; and

WHEREAS, we especially welcome the Mayor of Ise City, Japan, Mr. Mitsuo Mizutani, Chairperson Takako Doi and their delegation to our fair City to celebrate the National Cherry Blossom Festival;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, KERRY J. DONLEY, Mayor of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, and on behalf of the Alexandria City Council, do hereby proclaim March 22 through April 7, 2003, as:

"NATIONAL CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL"

in the City of Alexandria, and do hereby call upon our citizens to join with the people of Japan in observing this occasion.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Alexandria to be affixed this 25th day of March 2003.

KERRY J. DONLEY **MAYOR**
On behalf of the City Council
of Alexandria, Virginia

ATTEST:

Beverly I. Jett, CMC City Clerk