



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Stacy Campbell, Marketing Director
(478) 751-7413
scampbell@cherryblossom.com

794 Cherry Street
Macon, Georgia 31201
www.cherryblossom.com
Phone: 478-751-7429
Fax: 478-751-7108

February 21, 2008

And The Winner Is...

Macon, GA---Macon Georgia's Cherry Blossom Festival was awarded "Best Festival or Event" at the Southeast Festival and Events conference held in Greenville South Carolina last weekend. This award is highly significant because it means the festival literally swept this category in 3 separate awards competitions. Macon's Cherry Blossom Festival won the Pinnacle Award at the International Festival and Events Association conference in September which means that the festival is the "Best Festival in the World" in the budget category of \$750,000 to \$1.5 million.

At the Southeast Tourism conference in Lake Charles, Louisiana last September, the festival was awarded the Shining Example which is given to the "Best Festival or Event" within the states of Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia & West Virginia.

The category of "Best Festival or Event" was entered along with many other submissions and the Cherry Blossom Festival won the prestigious award at all three conferences. The entries are compiled of information including a festival overview, history, promotional and marketing campaigns, marketing materials, media outreach, merchandising program, sponsorship program, volunteer program, community outreach program, and website. A 16 page document along with hundreds of pieces of supporting material makes up the entry that is independently judged prior to the conferences.

The festival received 9 awards total at the Southeast Festival and Events Association conference; the gold awards were given for Volunteer of the Year for Mr. Lowell Register, Best Marketing Campaign, Best Pin by Mark Ballard, Best other Merchandise for the Cherry Blossom Flag, and Best Photo by Glenn Grossman. Two silver awards were given for Best Sponsor for Coca-Cola and Best Miscellaneous Clothing for the Cherry Blossom Tie, and one bronze was given for the Best T-shirt by Mark Ballard.

Ironically, overall the festival won 25 awards for the 25th annual Cherry Blossom Festival from International Festivals and Events Association, the Southeast Tourism Society, and the Southeast Festivals and Events Association. This is a tremendous testament for the staff, board, sponsors, and volunteers that make Macon's Cherry Blossom Festival happen.

Wright Tilley the President and CEO of the Cherry Blossom Festival was especially pleased to accept the many awards the festival received; "The 2007 25th anniversary festival was a great festival. It is a tremendous honor to receive all these accolades and we are proud to represent Macon and Bibb County". Wright and the staff hope to build on the success of the 25th anniversary with the 2008 festival taking place March 28th through April 6th.